

# The ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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The  
Wesleyan  
Message  
In The  
Life And  
Thought  
Of Today

WINTER 1957

Bulletin of Asbury Theological Seminary



# The ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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## Editorial . . .

### **Evangelism Today**

J. C. McPheeters

It is the purpose of evangelism to permeate every phase of the church's program. The major task of the church is to make disciples and establish them in the Christian faith. This evangelistic objective, is to be achieved by the three-fold ministry, of teaching, preaching, and healing. Evangelism is the grand trunk line on which the whole program of the church is to advance.

The phases of the evangelistic program include preaching, teaching, revivals, visitation, music, the printed page, prayer, and insistence upon the cleansing and enduement with the Holy Spirit. Prejudice is often aroused against evangelism, due to an expressive emphasis upon some one phase of evangelism, to the exclusion of the other phases. A full orb ed program of evangelism, maintains a balance of emphasis upon all phases of evangelism.

The re-discovery of evangelistic preaching by Billy Graham, has proven to be one of the most significant events of our generation. This discovery is told by Billy Graham in Christianity Today, issue of October 15, 1956, as follows:

"In 1949 I had been having a great many doubts concerning the Bible. I thought I saw apparent contradictions in the Scripture. Some things I could not reconcile with my restricted concept of God. When I stood up to preach, the authoritative note so characteristic of all preachers of the past, was lacking. Like hundreds of other young seminary students, I was waging the intellectual battle of my life. The outcome could certainly affect my future ministry.

"In August of that year I had been invited to Forest Home, a Presbyterian Conference, center high in the mountains outside Los Angeles. I remember walking down a trail, tramping into the woods, and almost wrestling with God. I dual ed with my doubts, and my soul seemed to be caught in the cross fire. Finally, in desperation, I surrendered my will to the living God revealed in the Scriptures. I knelt before the open Bible and said: 'Lord, many things this book I do not understand. But thou hast said, "The just shall live by faith." All I have received from thee, I have taken by faith. Here and now, by faith. I accept the Bible as thy word. I take it all. I take it without reservations. Where there are things I cannot understand, I will reserve judgment until I receive more light. If

this pleases thee, give me authority as I proclaim thy word, and through that authority convict me of sin and turn sinners to the Saviour.

"Within six weeks we started our Los Angeles crusade, which is now history. During that crusade I discovered the secret which changed my ministry. I stopped trying to prove that the Bible was true. I had settled in my own mind that it was, and this faith was conveyed to the audience. Over and over again I found myself saying 'The Bible says.' I felt as though I were merely a voice through which the Holy Spirit was speaking.

"Authority created faith. Faith generated response, and hundreds of people were impelled to come to Christ. A crusade scheduled for three weeks lengthened into eight weeks, with hundreds of thousands of people in attendance. The people were not coming to hear great oratory, nor were the interests merely in my ideas. I found they were desperately hungry to hear what God had to say through His Holy Word."

#### EVANGELISTIC TEACHING

The teacher is mentioned along with the evangelist, in the various ministries indicated in Ephesians 4:11: "And he gave some apostles; some prophets; and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of a ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Evangelistic teaching must be Bible-centered, if the goal is to be attained of making disciples and establishing them in the Christian faith. One of the chief opportunities for evangelistic teaching, is in the local church school. Dwight L. Moody was won to Christ through a Sunday School teacher. The world scarcely knows the name of Edward Kimball, the Sunday School teacher, but the world will never forget the name of Moody. It was on the morning of April 21, 1855, that Mr. Kimball entered the Houghton Store in Boston, with a purpose of speaking to young Moody, who was a member of his Sunday School class, about surrendering his life to Christ. Young Moody was in the rear of the store wrapping up shoes. The young shoe clerk's heart was responsive to the gentle touch of Kimball's hand, and the winsome invitation to accept Christ as his Saviour.

In the future years, Moody witnessed perhaps a thousand times to the heavenly glow which was in his heart, on that spring morning, when he left the store and walked the streets of Boston. He writes: "I went out of doors and fell in love with the bright sun shining over the earth. I never loved the sun before. And when I heard the birds singing their sweet song on the Boston Common, I fell in love with the birds. I was in love with all creation." Similar experiences are being re-enacted today, thousands of times over, by

faithful church school teachers, who have the evangelistic zeal and passion of Edward Kimball, who led young Moody to Christ.

#### MASS REVIVAL EVANGELISM

The history of American christianity presents a romance in mass evangelism, including the camp meeting, open air preaching, local church mass meetings, and city wide tabernacle meetings, the like of which is to be found in no other country in the world. Our pioneer heritage in mass evangelism springs from such celebrated names and associations as, Wesley preaching under the trees in Georgia; Robert Strawbridge on Sam's Creek in Maryland; Jonathan Edwards in the great awakening; George Whitefield preaching to twenty thousand people under the skies in Boston; President Timothy Dwight in the great revival at Yale University in 1802, (when over half the student body dedicated themselves to the Christian ministry), and Francis Asbury's ministry in the forest wilds, in camp meetings and mighty revival efforts, where multiplied thousands were converted and sanctified.

The dominant importance of mass evangelism in American christianity is well portrayed by James Stalker in his article on "Revivals of Religion" in Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. He says: "America is the land of revivals. Nowhere else have these been so frequent as in the United States; nowhere else have the churches owed to them so much of their increase and prosperity; and nowhere else have they been subjected to such philosophical and theological discussion. It is to the atmosphere of revival in which they live and move that American thinkers owe the position of preeminence in religious psychology conceded to them even by the Germans; and it is not surprising that the American book which has attained most notability throughout the world since the beginning of the century, should be of this type, William James' Varieties of Religious Experience (London, New York, 1902)."

There was a sharp decline in mass evangelism, following World War I, which extended over a period of nearly three decades. During this period of decline America lost the great social and moral reform measure of national prohibition. There was also a marked decline in many of the major church programs, including the closing of a thousand churches per year for some twenty years, a marked decline in church school attendance for an approximate ten year period, and a blackout of Sunday evening and midweek prayer services across the nation.

Mass evangelism had a rebirth, following World War II. City-wide, county-wide, and area-wide denominational and inter-denominational evangelistic meetings have been held across the nation. The results of these campaigns have greatly strengthened the church.

ches, and have been a large contributing factor in the new advance that is now being made in many of the major church programs, including an unprecedented church building program, organization of new churches, and large increases in church membership.

#### EVANGELISM IN 1957

We are confronted in 1957 with evangelistic possibilities beyond anything hitherto confronted in the 20th century. Thinking men in many areas of life, have arrived at the solid conclusion, that a dynamic evangelism is the only remaining hope for the solution of the colossal problems which plague America and the nations of the world. Everything else has been tried and has proved a failure. A new evangelistic alertness has been created during the past two decades to the possibilities of evangelism. A new prayer movement is spreading across our land, which has in it the potential for the undergirding of a mighty revival that could sweep over the nation and around the world. Visitation evangelism and mass evangelism have been integrated in many areas of church effort, upon a basis which hold increased possibilities for both of these methods of evangelism. Crime, divorce, alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, and licentious living, stand at an all time high in the history of the nation. But great revivals in the past have come in times of great apostasy and profligate living. In the light of history and the promises of God, our apostate age need not stand as an iron curtain, making a great revival impossible. The surrender to such a fatalistic attitude, is utterly contrary to the revival possibilities set forth in the word of God. The world is confronted with the possibility of annihilating atomic warfare or a sweeping spiritual revival. However, in the face of such possible tragedy, we are also confronted with the possibility of the greatest days in the spiritual life of our nation, just ahead.

Church membership in the United States has hit an all time high of slightly more than one hundred million. More than sixty percent of our population belong to some religious body. But with all of our increase in church membership, there is a sad lack in purity and power in the church, for such a crucial time as the present. A new consciousness is dawning, in many areas, concerning the need of the baptism with the Holy Spirit in the modern church. When this lack of purity and enduement is met in the baptism with the Holy Spirit, America will again find herself in the midst of a mighty spiritual awakening.

A spearhead of evangelistic effort for 1957, which will command the attention of the whole of Christendom, will be the great Billy Graham New York crusade to begin in Madison Square Garden May 15th. This campaign, in outlay of effort, publicity, organization,

and world-wide enlistment in prayer, represents what is perhaps the most colossal single evangelistic undertaking in the history of Christianity.

**IMPORTANT MONTHS AHEAD**

A significant summary of the evangelistic possibilities in the months ahead, is given in the January issue of **CHRISTIAN LIFE**: "Field studies reveal tremendous hunger on part of Christians for closer walk with the Lord, deeper work of the Holy Spirit . . . This shows up most clearly in great movement of prayer for revival. Evidences everywhere: local churches, interdenominational organizations, on mission field. Most surprising is marked trend among old-line denominations toward new evangelistic emphasis, deepened prayer life. Watch especially for sharper-than-ever step up in spiritual life of nation by early spring . . . Normal drop-off after Easter could easily be thwarted and clear revival underway by early summer."



## **The Evangelistic Challenge For New America**

**Dr. Wayne A. Lamb**

Church membership in the United States of America has reached an all time high. The statisticians tell us that approximately 60% of the people of America are now affiliated with some church. This percentage has been gradually climbing since World War II.

Crime and juvenile delinquency have also been on the increase. It is reported that crime is growing four times as fast as our population. It is a matter of great concern on the part of many church leaders that we are not effectively challenging and reaching the youth of America. This should cause us to re-examine our program and re-evaluate our methods.

The basic work of the church is with people and has to do with reaching and keeping persons for Christ. Between 1945 and 1955 there were 37,000,000 babies born in America. It is estimated that 45,000,000 more will be born between 1955 and 1965. In 1965 approximately half of the population of the United States will be under 22 years of age. This population ratio will mean literally a **NEW AMERICA**.

During the next 20 years there will be a 38.5 increase in population in the United States or a total increase of 63,000,000 persons. The largest increase will be in California and Florida, but there will be an increase in every state in the Union. In recent years several churches as a denomination have not been keeping up with the population increase. Any church that has not had a 10% increase in membership during the last 5 years is losing instead of gaining in proportion to the population. Today there are about 70,000,000 unchurched persons in the United States. With the 63,000,000 net gain in population in the next 20 years, America's greatest challenge is, and will continue to be, the reaching of these 133,000,000 persons for Christ. This offers the church the greatest challenge it has ever had.

We are living in the most dynamic and creative period in our history. Science daily produces something new. Every day the living habits of people are changing. We have more people than ever before and the people have more money to spend than ever before. The work day has been shortened and will, no doubt, be shortened considerably more in the future. Before long we shall probably have a 32 hour work week with a guaranteed annual wage.



If somehow the church can captivate the attention, interest and concern of the people, the opportunities will be unlimited, because the people will have more time to work for Christ and the church, and more money to contribute to the spreading of the Gospel. If the Church of today is to meet the evangelistic challenge for today and for tomorrow several things are important.

I

In the first place, the Church must examine itself concerning its own spiritual vitality. No doubt one of its great needs is to go deeper with God. Unless there is a deepening of the spiritual life of the church it is not likely that it shall have the spiritual vitality necessary to meet the challenge of the hour.

One sign of hope in this connection is found in the Prayer Life Movement that has been rising, spreading and permeating the life of the church in many areas. How such a movement got started no one knows. It seems to have sprung up from the "grass roots" of the church. In recent years many people have come to feel the desperate need of a more vital prayer life and, as a result of the consciousness of need, prayer groups or prayer cells have been voluntarily formed in many places. Shortly after the movement became evident, The General Board of Evangelism of the Methodist Church, ever sensitive to the currents in the church, designated a member of the staff of the board as Counselor for the Prayer Life Movement. Prayer vigils have been held on a national scale and on a church-wide scale. The year 1957 has been designated for a World-wide Prayer Movement. It is possible that this movement may so spiritually vitalize the church that she may rise up to meet the challenge of the hour.

II

A second thing that is important if the church is to meet the challenge for today is a re-evaluation of our concept of stewardship. Only a small percentage of the church members in America have any conception of what it means to be "a good steward of the manifold grace of God". The per capita giving of the membership of the 10 major protestant churches in America ranges from \$75.54 per member down to \$34.77 per member. With the average national income approaching \$5,000 per family, it is easy to see that contributions to the work of our churches represent a mere pittance compared with the stewardship teachings of the Holy Scriptures. To lift this level of giving to that which is taught in the word of God is one of the most difficult tasks confronting the church. If it could be done, however, the church could move forward in an evangelistic and missionary program that would make a tremendous impact upon the world.

## III

A third important consideration before the Church is that of building new churches and regrouping of some existing churches.

Scientific studies have revealed that the major contributing factor to the growth of a local church is the continuous increase of the number of classes in the Church School, which is in reality an increase of the units of operation. This same effect is no doubt realized also in increasing the number of churches. The more units of operation we have the more likely we are to grow.

One major denomination in America has set a goal of 30,000 new churches to be organized in the next 10 years. This will almost double the number of churches for the denomination. This is a phase of vital evangelism and will certainly make its contribution toward reaching a new America for Christ. With the increase in population every denomination will need to increase the units of operation.

Visitation evangelism is, we believe, the most effective way of establishing a new church. If one strong, well established church will use its own resources to establish a new one, it can be done effectively and quickly in any area where a new church is needed. Last March we saw visitation evangelistic teams from our church go into a new area of the city and enlist 100 charter members within a week's time. Worship services were started the next Sunday and a pastor secured within three weeks. Members of the new church were able to assume their operating expenses, including their pastor's salary, from the beginning. We believe this method should be used continuously in the growing suburbs of our various cities as the method of securing charter members for the establishment of a new church.

## IV

The fourth important consideration for meeting the evangelistic challenge for today is a well-rounded, balanced and effective program of evangelism in the local church. We face entirely different conditions to those of 50 years ago. Once mass evangelism was the primary method of winning people for Christ and the church. That was effective so long as the unchurched people attended the mass revival services. All of us know, however, that today it is practically impossible to get very many unchurched people into mass evangelistic services regardless of how much publicity we give to them. Even the much publicized Billy Graham campaigns reach comparatively few who are not members of any church. We would not in any sense wish to disparage mass evangelism, but would point out that it is not the only method promising abiding results in today's church life.

This being true every local church should plan and promote a well-rounded, balanced and effective program of evangelism if we are to reach New America for Christ. This program should include not just one or two methods of evangelism, but all methods that offer a substantial degree of effectiveness in winning people.

We realize that right down on the local level, where the people live and can be contacted, is the place at which the vital evangelistic work is done. It then becomes the serious and major responsibility of the local church to reach the people in the community of its constituency. No local church should depend upon a national movement for evangelism, but should plan a vital program of reaching those for whom the particular church is responsible.

Several things should be included in this well-rounded, balanced and effective program of evangelism for the local church.

1. An effective commission on membership and evangelism, meeting at least monthly and assuming responsibility for the overall evangelistic program of the church, is vitally essential. The commission should be organized with five or six sub-committees and each committee assuming responsibility for various phases of the work, including prayer and devotions, finding prospects, visitation evangelism, church attendance, assimilation of new members and cultivation of inactive members.

2. The Church School should become an evangelistic agency, to the end that each officer and teacher becomes a personal witness and a personal worker for Christ. Teachers must learn to teach for a verdict.

3. A revival campaign in each local church at least once each year is important, particularly for the quickening of the spiritual life of the church members themselves. It is very evident that one of our great fields of evangelism is among our church members. Many of them need to find God. In a revival campaign many of our church members can be led to a re-dedication of their lives and into an experience of the fullness of the Spirit. Every church member needs an experience of Christ that will give him a concern for every unchurched person in the community.

4. Visitation evangelism must be a vital part of a balanced program of evangelism for the church. Since many unchurched people never come to our public services, we must go to them with a personal witness. Weekly or monthly visiting by visitation evangelism teams as a year-round program will produce wonderful results. This can be intensified with a week of visitation evangelism each fall or each spring or both.

Of course, we need to find the prospects if we are to promote a visitation evangelism program. A religious census each year or each two years is important if we are to find the people. Other

available sources for prospects are the church and Church School rolls, checking for other members in families where a part are either members of the church or Church School, registration of attendance at the worship services, Welcome Wagon service, and other community agencies.

5. A vital evangelistic program for the local church must certainly include a mission to youth. There are 19,000,000 young people in America between the ages of 12 and 23 years who have no church affiliation. This number will be increasing with the growing population, unless the church becomes more effective in reaching youth for Christ. The church has no greater responsibility than to the youth of America. Youth can be trained to win youth and it is important to use them more extensively in the evangelistic program of the church.

6. A church attendance crusade each year can be a vital part of a year-round evangelistic program. This gives a wonderful opportunity to cultivate and re-enlist inactive members.

7. A constant cultivation of the devotional life of the members, which will include promotion of family worship is very important. The distribution of *THE UPPER ROOM* will aid greatly in the establishment of family altars and the cultivation of the devotional life of the people of the local church.

8. A vital, well balanced evangelistic program will also include regular Sunday evening evangelistic services, and regular preaching for a verdict on the part of the pastor at all the weekly worship services. This should include a clear invitation for people to seek Christ and accept Him as their personal Savior.

#### CONCLUSION

The Ford Motor Company spent \$500,000,000 in 1956 for expansion. Mr. Henry Ford II in announcing this program said "Just to keep from losing ground we've got to move ahead".

If the church is to keep from losing ground, we must move ahead with a vital evangelistic program. It is not enough to hold the lines. Battles are never won that way. With our increase in population in America, the challenge for the church becomes greater every day. The church must not fail a new America. We must deepen our own spiritual life; we must dedicate our money to God; we must build new churches for New America; we must have more preachers and missionaries to carry the Gospel; we must intensify our evangelistic and educational program to win the churched and also the unchurched for Jesus Christ. It is a tremendous task that calls for a deep dedication on the part of God's people.

## How Popular Is Real Evangelism?

Robert E. Coleman

Evangelism is the watchword of the hour. It has become a popular subject for conversation even in religious circles which a few years ago bitterly opposed it. Now scarcely can any kind of church assembly adjourn without making some stirring pronouncement upon this subject. It would almost seem that to be respectable in the church today, one must appear to be devoted to this cause. However, remembering the humanistic emphasis of many of these churchmen in the period before the last world war, one cannot help suspecting that some have subscribed to the new fashion from expediency rather than from personal conviction. Doubtless, not a few have accepted the evangelistic terminology only after it has been interpreted to accord with their own suppositions and prejudices. They use it more to exalt their piety than to challenge their dedication. Unfortunately, disgruntled liberals are not the only ones to be deceived. Many sincere men, committed to uphold the historic Christian faith, have unwittingly forced evangelism into a rather narrow mold. Through nearsightedness or stubbornness, these have sometimes failed to distinguish between true evangelism and erroneous applications of it. While the work goes on, the cause is hampered, and sometimes actually stymied, by this distorted perspective. In short, those who speak of evangelism, whether they be genuinely disposed to it or not may not always know what they mean, or intend to mean what they say. The language used to express the evangelistic concept may be simply an accepted part of the popular religious jargon.

### 1. In essence:

What is meant by evangelism? Does the word immediately awaken in the mind a positive and wholehearted proclamation of the Evangel of Christ? This is evangelism in its essence -- the Evangel manifesting itself. Basic to this definition are the elements of (1) action and (2) personality. Evangelism is the demonstration of the power of the Gospel. Or to put it another way, evangelism takes the Evangel out of theory and puts it into practice. The "good news" must be made known to be proved. The redeeming Word must be expressed to become a Gospel. It must be given away or it cannot be truly possessed. As one has said, "The water of life must be kept flowing or it will end in a cesspool." Moreover, this action is always expressed through personality. God does not redeem His creation through machines or programs, but through



persons. He revealed His own personality in the Son, Who in turn made the Father known to the disciples, that they through the Holy Spirit might manifest the Gospel to every creature. The Evangel must have people to make it known. It was first incarnated in Christ, and now by His Spirit the Evangel continues to speak in the life of the redeemed. This action of the Evangel in a dedicated person is evangelism. The explanation may seem simple enough, but the application of it may present a problem today. At least, when evangelism is related to the everyday work of the church, there is often a wide discrepancy between the real thing and the accepted practice. Each of us would do well to re-examine his understanding of what it means in terms of his own experience.

2. In relation to authority:

Evangelism is the objective of all of Divine Revelation, not merely an emphasis in the Christian religion. The Sovereign will of God to redeem that which He has made, fully expressed in Christ, and now operative through His Spirit, is the controlling purpose behind every inspired word of Scripture. It is not a facet of truth which can be turned on and off, nor one segment of Revelation separate from another. Everywhere man is seen to be lost and undone, a creature by nature and choice far short of the glory of his Creator. Yet God in Christ actively intervened in human history to effect the redemption of His people. This "good news" issues from the compassionate nature of the Holy Trinity, and is manifest wherever the creative love of God is known. Thus, at any point at which one might choose to fix his attention in the Word of God, when he really gets to the bottom of it, he will find evangelism. No sermon, no song, no Christian prayer is complete unless it throbs with this love. Moreover, this concept means that here is the one place to which all Christian theology will ultimately emerge. In this sense, evangelism can be said to reduce theology to its lowest common denominator, or to state it more appropriately, to its highest mission. If Christians cannot agree at this point, they never can. This is not to say, however, that the fundamentals of the faith can be compromised. Those doctrines which are incarnated in the Evangel, including the conception of Christ by the Holy Spirit, His vicarious suffering and blood atonement upon the Cross, and His bodily resurrection from the grave, can never be denied without destroying the objective authority of the Gospel.

Evangelism is historical as well as ecumenical. Some contemporary thinkers, seeking to show appreciation for both traditional orthodoxy and classical liberalism, have tried to fashion a new theology, which is Christ-centered and which admits the supernatural, but which ignores the direct and final Revelation of the

Bible. Ultimately, this view makes the Gospel merely the proclamation of the love of God received by faith and experience; it is utterly divorced from the historic validity of the incarnate life of the Son of God. Christ is accepted as experimentally divine, but not inherently so. While this neo-orthodox movement may use the terminology of evangelism, it is evident that the words are not intended to mean what they once did. Popular or not, it is only destined to produce confusion and suspicion. It is presumptuous to think that God will bless a Gospel effort to redeem perishing men when the Revelation of that "good news" to man is not believed to be historically true and perfect. Such a system of thought has never produced strong convictions of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and our modern predicament is but another demonstration of this fact.

3. In relation to Christian calling:

Evangelism is designed to be the work of every Christian, not just of some specially ordained church workers or a few pious saints of the church. Each must have his own religion, and if he has it, he must share it. A Gospel that does not gladden the hearts of its adherents and make them eager to pass it on to someone else is manifestly no "good news" at all, nor is it likely to be attractive to anyone to whom it is offered. Whoever is entrusted with the Gospel must witness. Certainly the pastor should set the example for his flock, but every member of the fold is commissioned to witness. Clergyman and laymen alike must come to see that if the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is to mean anything, it must mean that every Christian is called to be a witness to his faith. Jesus was not speaking merely to a few Galileans when He said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). The invitation was extended through them to all of every age who would follow in His steps. Repeatedly, by word and deed, He heralded this truth. Even as Christ was sent of the Father "to seek and to save" (Luke 19:10), so He likewise sent his followers (John 20:21 Cf. Mark 16:15). We are called to be sent. No one may transfer this responsibility to another.

The sentimental idea that the pastor is a sort of religious general engaged to do the fighting for the men in the ranks, while they sit at ease, is as absurd as it is unscriptural. Yet, ridiculous as it may seem, this notion persists among millions of laymen. Doubtless, the rather vague way in which many of the clergy have understood their own evangelistic responsibility has not helped the situation. There has been a growing sense of lay concern in the church in recent years, yet a tragic state of affairs still exists. It must be remedied if the church is to fulfill its appointed mission.

Any attempt to minimize the obligations as well as the privileges of every Christian to evangelize will inevitably frustrate, if not actually repudiate, the work of Christ.

4. In relation to follow-up:

Evangelism calls for bonafide disciples, not only converts and church members. Such is the commission of Jesus (Matt. 28:19). The conversion of sinners is, of course, the initial purpose of the Gospel. But new converts brought into the fellowship of the church are still "babes in Christ" (I Peter 2:2), "unskilled in the word" (Heb. 5:13); they need to be brought to spiritual maturity. This requires spiritual parental care or follow-up work. A task of this nature may be less spectacular than winning new converts, but it is no less important. Jesus spent three years personally training His twelve disciples, yet when He finished with them, all but one went out to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Likewise, our converts must be followed-up until they can reproduce their life, and train their converts in turn to reproduce (II Tim. 2:2). This process of training may be called Christian education if one pleases, but the point is that the end product is evangelism. Neither education nor evangelism can be justified unless they produce evangelists. A Christian is born to reproduce, and the incarnate Evangel is never fully manifest until this happens. The fact that many converts are allowed to rest content in their conversion is the reason so many of them fall away. Most of these spiritual casualties of the church could be avoided if more diligent attention were given to their instruction in "all that the Lord commanded" (Matt. 28:20). Christ ordained us to bring forth fruit, and He intended that this fruit should remain (John 15:16). If contemporary evangelism were as much concerned with making disciples as in counting professions of faith, the rising statistics of church membership would give more occasion for rejoicing. The truth of the matter is that Christians, no matter how high their profession, who do not show the fruit of their experience have need of asking if they themselves are completely evangelized.

5. In relation to society:

Evangelism involves the transformation of the whole realm of human experience, not just the individual needs of the soul. The Evangel rings with the proclamation of the Kingdom, which brings every social relationship of life under the dominion of God. Of course, this comes only as men are redeemed one by one. The attempt to make the Gospel primarily social, a fashion particularly popular in the last generation, utterly subverts the plan of salvation. The Evangel is personal and is addressed to individual persons. Society can never be permanently changed until the individual mem-



bers of society are born again. Personal sin is the ultimate cause of all evil, and the depravity of society as a whole is only a reflection of this deeper problem. However, once a man has been redeemed by the power of the Gospel, his life must express itself in every social relationship. The Evangel would not be adequate unless it brought "good news" to the totality of human experience. The family, the community, the government, in short, every part of life must come under the rule of God.

Evangelism thus has something relevant to say to every social problem. War, public dishonesty, the liquor traffic, sex perversion, the race question -- whatever the social perversion may be it comes under the jurisdiction of evangelism as it seeks to make its message immediately practical in everyday living. In this connection, it is not without significance that many of the great social reforms of our civilization have had their roots deep in evangelical revivals of religion, including the abolition of slavery and child labor, the trade union movement, women's suffrage, the temperance movement, the concern for literacy and education, and many other noble humanitarian causes. The Gospel is individual in application, but ultimately social in its outreach. Failure to keep this perspective has often brought reproach upon the cause of evangelism, and the situation in the present day is no exception.

6. In relation to the church program:

Evangelism must be at the heart of the whole church life, not just a special phase of its program. When evangelism is accepted as the Gospel in action, it must be the center around which every activity of the church revolves. Any part of the church which is not actively expressing the saving Lord is simply not living in the sphere of the Gospel. The church is no mere organization; it is an organism, the continuation of the incarnate Body of Christ. Controlling its life should be the same evangelistic passion which motivated the body of her Lord. In this sense, one can say that to the extent the church allows other things to take preeminence over evangelism, to that extent she has allowed human instincts to crowd out the divine. Why have a Sunday School or a Boy Scout Troop in the church if these are just for the purpose of accumulating knowledge or fostering fellowship? What purpose does the ladies' society or a church supper serve if the chief objective is the promotion of good public relations? In fact, why conduct any program in the name of the church if the evangelization of the world can get along without it? The point is that all of these church organizations and activities in their own way should contribute to the redemptive work of the church itself. An old lady focused the issue exactly when she turned to the professional guide showing her through West-

minster Abbey and said, "Young man! Young man! Will you stop your chatter for a moment and tell me -- has anyone been saved here lately?"<sup>1</sup> Saved in Westminster Abbey? Why not? It is the church's business to save. How tragic it is when the concern for fellowship, civic improvement, intellectual attainment, or some other secondary consideration, becomes the controlling passion of church life.

This confusion of priorities is doubtless one of the most bewildering problems confronting the contemporary religious society. It is not easy to keep first things first in the church, but it is even harder to face the consequences of not doing so. It is a truism that whenever evangelism is relegated to an incidental place in a church's program, that church has lost its real Christian validity.

#### 7. In relation to time:

Evangelism is a force that is continually at work; it does not progress with spasmodic intervals of inspiration. One cannot keep the Gospel from moving any more than one can stop a tornado from blowing. The moment it ceases to expend itself, it ceases to be. Evangelism by its very nature is action; and when there is no action, there is no evangelism. So long as God is pleased to speak "good news" to dying men, the story must be told to the ends of the earth and to the end of time. There is no discharge in this work on this side of eternity. Consequently, every church must ever be in a state of mobilization.

The routine, as well as the special, worship of the church must be alerted to this need. "In season and out of season", the work must go on. A big revival meeting or visitation program once or twice a year is to be commended to every church, but these of themselves are no assurance of an adequate evangelistic concern the year round. Sometimes, in fact, these special campaigns have a way of soothing the conscience of a congregation who otherwise do nothing the rest of the year to rescue the perishing. There are, of course, advantages in making special efforts at evangelism during periodic intervals in the church calendar, but these should only be an intensifying of an emphasis which is constant. There are multitudes of people not reached during these special seasons of concern. Many of them could be won if the church would maintain a wise and continuous vigil for souls. The popular practice of a church going all-out for evangelism in some kind of an annual event, and then letting the work rest until the next year, would be amusing if it were not so pathetic. Immortal souls are in the balance. Unless the church is always seeking to save the lost, she is not always true to her task.

8. In relation to methods:

Evangelism seeks to get results, not merely to promote techniques. Methods are important only as they are instrumental to getting the Evangel to every creature (and seeing that something is done about it.) Any method which God is pleased to use in the salvation of a soul is a good evangelistic procedure for that person. Jesus was willing to use any method which was suited to the situation, whether it was preaching to multitudes in the open air, organizing systematic visitation campaigns, or just counselling with a lonely soul along the road. The apostle Paul summed up this example when he said that he was made all things to all men, that by all means some might be saved (I Cor. 9:22). The same should be true of every disciple. One constrained by the love of Christ should be willing to employ any strategy necessary to convert a sinner from the error of his ways. Whether the particular plan is endorsed by his denomination or not is entirely beside the point. The question is, Will it work?

When it is apparent that the old method is not getting results, a church desperate for souls should be willing to try something new. Perhaps a street meeting, a youth retreat, a city-wide evangelistic crusade, an all-night prayer vigil, cottage meetings, a healing service, or something else effective is reaching those people who have failed to respond to the gospel. Surely we must believe that God has some way in which He can touch every heart. He is not willing that any should perish. A Christian then dare not give up until he has tried everything. Nevertheless, one of the stifling problems confronting us today is the staid way in which the church has been reluctant to accept new and different evangelistic methods. Almost all of us have a tendency to get so obsessed with the two or three methods of evangelism which have been particularly effective in our experience that we neglect other ways of achieving our goal. Some even become critical of those who prefer different methods to theirs. Some churches act as if their perpetuation were dependent upon a certain type of evangelism. Churches which fail to enlarge their horizons concerning the evangelistic approach are not likely enlarging their boundaries. But the seriousness and urgency of the work allows no one an opportunity to cast aspersions upon a brother. Evangelism is too big for that. Actually, it is time that each of us give ourselves unreservedly to winning the world for Christ, and quit bickering about how it is to be done, or who is to get the credit for doing it.

9. In particular:

Evangelism indicates specific action, not just general random activity. Of course, evangelism should be the motivating impulse

of the whole church, but it will not function thus unless it is made the definite concern of the congregation. The Gospel does not speak in generalities or abstractions. It is a definite and final action of God which demands in man a clear-cut repentance and faith, issuing in a life of obedient service. Conversion and reproduction do not happen by accident. The work of bringing lost sinners into the Kingdom of God is far too serious ever to be taken for granted. All too often the feeling that "evangelism is everything" boils down in practice to the fact that it is nothing in particular. This popular notion has a way of becoming an excuse for indolence and indifference. For many modern forms of Christianity that have lost their faith and vision, it has become the justification for religious programs which clearly make no honest effort at evangelism. Giving this kind of lip service to the Evangel without giving it specific implementation is downright hypocrisy.

Moreover, a constant whirl of activity in the church is no assurance that the work of evangelism is being done. Crowds may come to the Sunday Services (especially the morning worship hour), new people may join the church and Sunday School, large building programs may be completed, a tremendous energy of promotion may be exerted and evangelism may be missing. Mere exhaustion in church work is no sign that souls are born again. A pious life is no certain evidence that this work is going on. No Christian has any right to assume that he is doing the work of an evangelist unless he is consciously doing such work. A good life, a knowledge of Scripture, a love for the souls of men, and many other worthy things may be considered prerequisites for evangelism, but they of themselves will not get the job done. Evangelism requires deliberate action, and the sooner we recognize this in practice, the sooner we can get on with the work of God.

Evangelism! There is no contemporary word fraught with so much pathos and misunderstanding; yet when we come right down to it, I suspect that our basic problem is not so much in understanding the term as in being willing to pay the price of evangelism. It will yield its full meaning only to one intensely devoted to it. Evangelism is hard work. It demands all our resources. It takes the best of our mind, and soul, and strength. It means laying aside every prejudice, and every self-appointed way. It involves the highest sacrifice. It cost Jesus His life. The worldly-minded religious leaders in the presence of our suffering Lord ironically stated the truth when they said in derision, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save" (Matt. 27:42). Of course He could not save Himself. He had come "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). The Saviour of the world could not save His own life and still redeem a people

bound for death and Hell. Nor can we.

There is no easy way to do this work. It is a labour of love, which reserves nothing for itself nor calls anything its own. Evangelism is the way of the Cross. If we refuse the Cross, we will miss the Evangel; and in so doing, we will lose our own souls. Dare we take this matter lightly? It is easy to talk about, but we must do more than this to make lost sinners know that we mean what we say. Mere resolutions of church conferences and findings of study commissions, however convincing, can never save a soul. Initiating a multitude of church programs can never redeem this world for God. There is a Cross before us, and there will be no real evangelism without it. Who is going to pay the price? This is the real question, and its answer will reveal how popular evangelism really is.

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<sup>1</sup>Peter Emmons, *Pattern of Things to Come*, ed. by D. McConnell, Friendship Press, 1955, p. 4.

## Effective Evangelism: Some Case Studies

Basil G. Osipoff

Just as according to the old saying "the proof of the pudding is in its eating", the true test of evangelism can be measured by the tangible results it may realize. In speaking to His disciples Jesus puts the emphasis on spiritual fruitage as the true stamp of their discipleship: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain. . ."<sup>1</sup> So, the true spirit of evangelical Christianity is not found in the development of new forms of worship or in the revisions of a ritual. Organizational machinery without the oil of the Holy Spirit frequently results in a harvest of chaff without the wheat.

It is rather evident that we are living in a world of confused ideas, conflicting views, ambiguous terms and ill-defined purposes. This is true not only of the world at large, but also of that segment of it, which we very broadly designate as Christendom. The very breadth of Christendom militates against clear objectives. Neither catholicity nor ecumenicity, the two most currently popular ideas, necessarily mean spirituality. Exactly the opposite is frequently the case. The religious hierarchy of Roman Catholicism is pre-occupied with ineffective dogmas and irrelevant liturgical routines, while, on the other hand, liberal Protestantism is trying desperately to salvage itself from total theological disintegration. Both are void of the evangelistic spirit and neither one has much to offer to a hungry heart that is disturbed by sin.

### True Evangelism and Evangelicalism are Inseparable

In the light of the conditions we have noted above, we find ourselves compelled to turn to what is properly called evangelical Christianity with its implicit zeal for souls and compassion for the lost. As to the relation of any creed to Christ and His cross, Dr. E. T. Clark has clearly pointed out: "It is not how many creeds I can subscribe to but how deeply I catch His passion and share the same with men."<sup>2</sup> It was said of Goforth, the well-known missionary, that "when he found his own soul needed Jesus Christ, it became a passion with him to take Jesus Christ to every soul."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John 15:16

<sup>2</sup>*The Missionary Imperative*, Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn., p. 84

<sup>3</sup>R. Goforth, *Goforth of China*, McLillan and Stewart Ltd., Toronto Canada. p. 31



It is thus evident that evangelism is contrary to the views of some, not a nuisance, but a necessity. It is a way of escape from false religious piety. Similarly, it is not a mould but a movement, a compelling urge, a consuming passion for the salvation of the lost. Furthermore, it is not an organizational procedure but a spiritual organism in action. As such, it is definitely not a receding faith but a proceeding force, born of an inward glance, inspired by an upward gaze and moved by an outward look. Truly, "the fields are white and ready unto harvest." The time is ripe and we are conscious of an impelling need for another crusade for Christ and for souls.

We find ourselves confronted with this urgent question: "Is the church ready to accept this challenge and to discharge its duty?" If it is ready, then much remains to be done. The church must recapture its objective by becoming evangelical and evangelistic; it must restore its former glory by recapturing the pioneer spirit of the former days. It must re-vitalize its organization and re-kindle its fires on the altar of Christian service and soul-winning. Dr. A. J. Gordon puts it thus: "Whether the one be high-born or low-born, he must be re-born before he can enter the kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup>

While in Philadelphia last summer, I read an account in a newspaper of a woman who gave birth to triplets who were subsequently named Mark, Luke and John. What an inspiring trio of sons! But their father was not quite that fortunate; his name was Bill! Can anything be done for him? The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is fully capable of changing both the name and the man. "The Gospel is adequate because it turns bitterness into blessing by reinstating God in the human life."<sup>5</sup>

#### Basic Presuppositions

There are certain presuppositions basic to evangelical Christianity which should resolve themselves in a kind of evangelistic spirit which would compel the church to go out and "seek and save that which is lost".

First, God is love. Because of this "He commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."<sup>6</sup> The love of God which was "shed abroad in our hearts" through Jesus Christ, must inspire our love for others.

Second, as John, the disciple, tells us, "God is light and in Him

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<sup>4</sup>The Holy Spirit in Missions, Fleming H. Revell, New York. p. 135.

<sup>5</sup>A. J. Moore, *Central Certainties*, Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. p. 5.

<sup>6</sup>Romans 5:8

is no darkness at all."<sup>7</sup> It is to His disciples that Jesus said on one occasion, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness."<sup>8</sup> On another occasion He said, "Ye are the light of the world."<sup>9</sup> In other words, by the very virtue of our discipleship we must seek to dispel darkness of sin from troubled human hearts through the ministry of the Word of God.

Third, from the Word of God we know that God is life. "He that has the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."<sup>10</sup> Life without Him has in reality no meaning and no satisfying positive content. Should we fail to make Him known to the world it shall continue to wander in the darkness of sin and in the despair of soul. The Saviour must have kept this in mind when He said, before His departure, "ye shall be witnesses unto me."<sup>11</sup>

So, it is essential that we see that the light of the Gospel continues to shine in the darkness through the ministers of the Word, evangelists, pastors, teachers and personal witnesses of Christ. Evangelism and an evangelist are inseparable. To be a disciple of Christ means to be a soul-winner, as a vital part of witnessing for Him. Regardless of the type of the evangelism, the task remains the same: it is "to set the captive free". In order to be effective, evangelism must become "personal" with all of us. In a sense, we are all "evangelists", all "witnesses", all "soul-winners" if we are possessed by the spirit and the compassion of Christ.

#### Specific Instances

Now, to be more specific. What are the evidences for the effectiveness of evangelism? Does it really produce results? Can we put our hands on something that is tangible, observable, something that is real? Indeed, we can! The historical evidence is there and it is really overwhelming. But because of the limitations of space it would be impossible for us to survey in any detail of the accomplishments of the grace of God in the hearts of men through the ministry of the apostles, the church fathers, the spiritual reformers, the mystics, the theologians, the pastors, the evangelists, and the servants of God in all the walks of life. Biographies of great evangelists, accounts of great revivals, accomplishments of some outstanding individual soul-winners, are all available to any serious investigator. We are primarily concerned here to show that effective evangelism can be carried on without a big organization, with a very small amount of publicity, on a limited scale but

<sup>7</sup> John 1:9

<sup>8</sup> John 8:12

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 5:14

<sup>10</sup> John 5:12

<sup>11</sup> Acts 1:8



with limitless results in the human heart. Even though, not all are great evangelists or recognized soul-winners, all may be instruments in bringing someone to Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a good news to every needy heart.

The author of this article can verify the reality of the transforming grace of God in his own heart. It happened on the mission field . . . in China . . . among Russian refugees. It was the case of a refugee embittered in spirit, sad and demoralized in heart, away from home, destitute and hungry. But, as is true in all cases, man's extremity became God's opportunity. Providentially, I was lead into a little mission hall, operated by American Methodists, where a full Gospel was preached under the power and unction of the Holy Spirit. It was there where I repented of my sins and accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. The light of God broke through: It broke through the darkness of sin, through sorrow and despair, through the ignorance and prejudice of Catholicism, through the empty shell of a nominal Christianity, through the outward crust of a shallow profession, into my very heart and caused it to become "strangely warmed." The Lord Jesus became the Saviour of my soul. The simple Gospel of our Saviour's love and forgiveness, spoken in a simple manner, from simple and sincere faith, even though spoken by ordinary men, produced extraordinary results in my heart. I was saved from sin. God spoke peace to my heart. I knew it then and I know it now. I know that He saved me to serve others, to preach, to teach, to evangelize, to be a witness to the saving power of Christ. This witness for God has been going on for over thirty years and He has always been true and faithful. The grace of God is sufficient! Let no one think that this is one of those exceptional cases to be found only now and then. God is not a respecter of persons, as we shall presently see.

Suppose we take a case of an atheistic communist who was a Red Army man and an ardent supporter of the anti-religious program. He came to our mission, and, in the very first service, the Gospel truth pierced his heart with an arrow of conviction. He "came to himself" and "repented in sackcloth and ashes." What a joy it was to me to witness the transformation of his heart and life.

A report came to us through the Christian underground movement, of a young communist leader who became a Christian and an effective soul-winner. Shortly after that, the communists arrested and exiled him to Siberia. But for him it was just another mission field and an opportunity to witness for Christ. For instance, when on one occasion, lectures on atheism and dialectical materialism were announced, to be followed by a discussion on religion and atheism, he was there-on hand, willing and eager to participate.

What a golden opportunity for witnessing to the saving power of God, he felt! So, unflinchingly at the end of each lecture he gave an humble testimony to God's saving and keeping power, inspiring his listeners to such an extent that they were eager to hear his testimony every night at the end of the lecture. Communist threatenings failed to stop the glowing testimony of this faithful servant of God. One night at the end of the regular lecture he gave his usual testimony, probably his last one. Sure enough, at midnight three men came to his house and the next morning he was found by the rail-road track, with his face in the snow, with his Bible under his arm, and . . . with a bullet-hole in his head. But, what of it? This is not a tragic end, but a glorious beginning. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

Someone may ask: "Does it pay to preach? To evangelize? To support missions?" As you can see for yourself, one soul like the one of this young Christian martyr is worth all the effort, while only in eternity itself, shall we be able to fully grasp, by His help, the full significance of eternal salvation. The grace of God is sufficient and can effectively sustain us in the day of trial.

Just now I am thinking of two Russian men who were working with me as life guards on the Life-Saving Station on one of the Chinese rivers. Both of them were chronic drunkards. One was literally consumed by alcohol and went to a premature grave at the early age of twenty-five. The other man was closely following in his footsteps until something intervened. That "something" was the Gospel truth concerning sin and salvation. A friend of mine went frequently to talk to him about the need of the Saviour. Many hours were spent thus but seemingly to no avail. One night, on his usual mission, this minister friend of mine found this object of his sincere concern under a stairway in a school-house, so drunk that he could hardly utter an intelligible word. Was there anything he could do about it? "The Spirit of the Lord" seemed as it were to "come upon him" and in righteous indignation against the sins of this man, he proceeded to give him a regular physical thrashing right under the stairway. But when the smoke of the conflict had cleared away, the minister was found on his knees in the middle of the floor praying for the poor wretched soul of the drunkard and the drunkard was on that same floor confessing his own sins to God and in agony of his soul, pleading for mercy and forgiveness. "But", someone will say, "this is such an un-orthodox procedure!" Granted, but who are we to question God's wisdom in dealings with men. "His ways are past finding out." The fact remains, the drunkard was saved that very night; and for over thirty years has been a faithful minister of this Gospel that saved him, reaching many other needy

souls. Yes, the grace of God is sufficient even in a case like that. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ proved itself the power of God unto salvation.

Several years ago, as a pastor in the South Georgia Conference, I held a revival meeting in my own church. The Spirit of the Lord graciously visited us and blessed our efforts. Conviction was strong, hearts were melted. The people became hungry for the truth. Sin seemed black and ugly and God's grace so very wonderful! Many came to the altar, but among others, I remember especially one. He was a man of about fifty years of age. He had a wife and a child, but no happiness was in his home for he was an alcoholic. As the invitation went forth with repeated pleadings for surrender to God, this man stood there in his pew with agony written all over his face. Could there be any hope for him? He had tried everything in the catalog in many attempts to break this hold of this evil habit, but every time he had failed miserably. Could God save him? As the end of the invitation approached, he suddenly left his seat, came forward and knelt at the altar, only to rise again with joyful heart and a triumphant look. God did set him free. I watched him carefully. Having joined my church, he became a faithful steward and a fervent worker in the Kingdom. For these many years I have watched his beautiful Christian spirit. Is not he also a miracle of God's grace?

Occasionally you will hear of a so-called "hopeless case", any spiritual approach to him being seemingly impossible. Even in the writer's limited ministry there were instances in which by all the appearances, an irresistible force of God's convicting truth met an immovable object of man's stubborn opposition to the will of God. But such was not the case, for one soon finds out that "the things that are impossible with men, are possible with God".

The writer came face to face with such cases in camp meetings in Georgia. In one of them, three of us served as preachers, taking turns in preaching throughout the camp schedule. The attendance was good and the people were responding to the call of the Gospel. There was one young man present in that congregation which attracted our attention. He was a chronic seeker at every service. Morning, afternoon or night, for seven days in succession he led the way to the altar, making twenty-one trips to the altar during the camp meeting. Was he one of those "impossible" cases? All of the preachers and personal workers had done their best to help him, but no success crowned their sincere efforts. They prayed, they read the Bible to him, they pointed out to him God's promises, they sang, they stayed with him hour after hour, but no victory came. He prayed, he cried and confessed but left the place of seeking time and again with a crushing burden upon his lonely

heart, only to come back for prayer during the next scheduled service.

At long last, we decided to invite him to our preacher's tent and there, again lying down in the middle of the floor he cried out to God for mercy. "God have mercy on me. O God, have mercy on me!" Finally, the Spirit of the Lord moved upon this writer's heart to do something desperate. We turned his face upward and held him there in that position so that he could not bury his face in his hands. Then I said: "You stop crying! God will never answer your prayer, unless you stop repenting and begin believing. All things are possible to him that believeth and without faith it is impossible to please God. Can not you believe in God and believe in Him now?" There was a moment of quietness, then an earnest look upward, a peaceful smile and a deep sigh of relief . . . The work was done! Reconciliation was effected. The "impossible" became a reality, an assurance, an experience, a verifiable fact of the transforming grace of God.

It is with great reluctance that the writer must bring this modest article to a close with this one final instance. Again, the occasion was a camp meeting service. The sermon emphasized believing God's promises and by faith appropriating God's blessings. In the midst of the invitation the Spirit of God whispered: "Go and talk to those two men and invite them to come to the altar for prayer." I immediately obeyed. The first man came at once and as the other man was quite a distance away from the platform, the writer started making his way toward him, but to his surprise, he saw that this man was himself starting forward before the personal invitation could be issued. It was a wonderful verification of the correctness of the impression upon the evangelist to go out and bring him in. The man came walking on his crutches slowly and calmly until he reached the altar, where with great difficulty he knelt and gave himself to earnest, but silent prayer. The after-service came and was dismissed with hearts being blessed, but the man continued praying . . . Then, suddenly he got up and said: "Lord, I believe thy promise and I thank Thee for healing me."

Perhaps a word of explanation will be in order. He was a well-known and well-liked man in the camp. For fourteen years he had been coming there, spending much time in prayer and testimony, but he was completely incapacitated by a crippling case of rheumatism. His limbs were completely drawn together and he could walk only by throwing his entire body forward with the support of the crutches. He seemed really a hopeless case, but . . . was he?

"Lord, I thank you for healing me!" He rose up from the altar, neatly placed his crutches together on the altar-rail and stood there upright for a few moments . . . Then, he took a short step

forward, the first step in fourteen years . . . then another one, just a little wider . . . and a third, this time a full-sized step, and . . . what happened after that is difficult to describe! With a shout of joy and in a state of indescribable happiness, he rushed forward to meet his waiting wife and together with her he wept and rejoiced and praised God and shouted and exhorted! He was instantly cured of rheumatism in response to the Gospel message of faith in the promise of God.

It is the writer's firm conviction, based on studies and observations, as well as on personal experiences in soul-winning, that the hope of the Christian movement today, in its attempt to lead the people and the nations out of the present conditions of turmoil, bitterness and international hatred is found in that positive, direct, urgent and sympathetic presentation of Christ to the problems of the heart of humanity, for which evangelism is so fittingly adapted. "There is a balm in Gilead." There is a solution to our problems. Christ has ever been and still is the answer -- Christ presented with sincerity and directness to the hearts and conscience of bewildered and groping men and women.

## Evangelism and Education

George Allen Turner

### Can Higher Education Be Really Evangelistic?

The place of education in an evangelistic church has seldom been clearly defined. Since the days of Robert Raikes and the modern Sunday school movement, education of children and youth has been widely accepted as part of evangelism -- it is really educational evangelism. What is called "higher education" is a different matter. It is not the inculcation of Christian doctrines and virtues, which is the province of catechetical schools, but rather the training in the general arts and sciences of one already committed to the Christian way. It is "higher education" within a pattern of Christian idealism which constitutes our immediate subject of concern. This inquiry focuses in the question of whether Christian higher education can effectively serve the cause of evangelism.

The Catholic Church, during the Middle Ages and at other times, has viewed the free inquiry after truth as dangerous. It has felt it safer to so channel investigation as to insure that it does not call in question the correctness and supremacy of the church militant. In self-defense it has often resorted to the theory of the twofold truth -- that what is true in the natural realm may not be true in the spiritual realm and vice versa. This involves a separation of the categories of faith and knowledge or religion and science. The alternative conviction, and the sound one, is that all truth is a basic unity. Pietism and Methodism have sometimes been inclined to accentuate the difference between the mind and the heart or the intellectual and emotional aspects of religion. It appears in such slogans as "a man's religion should be beneath his collar bone." This implies the basic truth that the Christian religion involves more than doctrine or theory but is really the transformation at the seat of personality, including emotion and volition, as well as cognition, i.e., "the heart." But it ignores the fact that "the head" is more nearly the seat of the soul than is "the heart." In Pietism (including Methodism) this emphasis came about as a protest against Protestant scholasticism which over-emphasized the rational and liturgical in religion to the neglect of the dynamic.

In many instances both individuals and denominations which have placed great stress on acquiring a broad liberal arts education have experienced a loss of evangelistic fervor. So frequently has this been the pattern that some have concluded that one's zeal for the Lord is in inverse proportion to one's educational achievement, and that there is danger in "much learning." A closer look at the



facts justifies the conclusion that it is not the amount of learning that accounts for diminished spiritual fervor and "passion for souls," but rather the wrong kind of education. There is no basic contradiction between learning and evangelistic zeal. Indeed, historically it can be shown that evangelism of the best type has been best sustained by education.

#### Education Often an Aid to Revivalism

History disproves the assumption that education in itself is hostile to purity of faith and perpetuation of spiritual fervor. It is true that in ancient Israel the prophets were often suspicious of the priests and wise men, regarding them as betrayers of the nation's spiritual heritage. But during the four centuries of twilight between the Old and New Covenants the scribes kept alive the lamp of both learning and devotion. Ezra is the prototype of the scholar-saint who sustained the people of God when the going was hard. During this period the synagogue came into existence and proved to be both unique and unprecedented as an educational factor but equally effective as an evangelistic agency. In the synagogue the instruction of the masses in religion first became practical. The synagogue was, in addition, the center for Jewish evangelistic outreach to the Gentiles. Jesus recognized the evangelistic zeal of the scribes and Pharisees when He said, "ye compass land and sea to make one proselyte." In Judaism, therefore, education proved an aid to evangelism, not a hindrance.

In the Protestant Era the Pietists set an example hard to equal in missionary zeal. The Danish-Halle mission is an outstanding example of this. The University of Halle was the intellectual center of Pietism and also its missionary center. It was from the University of Halle that the first modern missionaries -- fore-runners of a host of missionary volunteers of the modern era -- went forth in 1705. Closely allied with these people were the Moravians whose leader, Zinzendorf, was educated at Halle. The Moravians have set an example of missionary zeal which no other church group has even approached, sending one missionary to every ninety-two members as compared with the average church's record of one missionary for every 2500 members. They have three times as many members on the foreign field as in the home churches. The Anabaptists, who represented spiritual fervor with less educational background, were less evangelistic than the Pietists, especially the Moravians.

#### Education and the Great Awakening

The Great Awakening during the colonial period in American history was one of the greatest spiritual life movements since Pentecost. One of the major factors in its continued influence was William Tennant's "Log College." William Tennant, educated in

the Established church in Ireland, later became a Presbyterian pastor in Pennsylvania. In Buck's County, Pennsylvania, he erected a log house twenty feet square in which he opened a school for the training of ministers. His school became outstanding for the lasting impression he made upon his students. Among the "Log College" graduates were fourteen young men who entered the Presbyterian ministry. These young men were the first American-trained ministerial candidates, and they played a major role in determining the course of their church for the next hundred years. Graduates of Tennant's "Log College" not only became outstanding preachers of their generation, but some of them founded other "log colleges" which in turn produced outstanding preachers. Exactly one hundred of these "log colleges" were founded between 1726 and 1800. It was the graduates of these schools which were the chief instruments used by God in the Great Awakening in the Middle Atlantic colonies.

Meanwhile in New Jersey, T. J. Frelinghuysen, a Dutch Reformed minister educated by the Pietists, was the pioneer in the Great Awakening in that area. He made common cause with Gilbert Tennant, son of the founder of the original "Log College," and together through their influence the whole frontier experienced a powerful revival of religion. Ministers graduated from the "log colleges," so named in derision, could be counted on to perpetuate the revival. It is to their impetus that the new movement extended and sustained its influence. The older ministers of the Presbyteries opposed the revival and sought to control the situation by enacting laws which would recognize as ministers only graduates of Scottish and New England colleges -- a blow aimed directly at the "log college" graduates. Another law aimed in the same direction sought to restrict the supplying of vacant pastorates. In self defense the evangelical ministers set up a Presbytery of their own. The New Brunswick Presbytery, and ordained men sympathetic to the revival. Later these men, ousted from the Philadelphia Synod because of their revivalistic views, formed the New York Synod consisting mostly of evangelical ministers from the "log colleges" and those graduates of Yale who were favorable to revivalism. The same group later founded the College of New Jersey, later to become Princeton University and Seminary. For years Princeton was the stronghold of both learning and evangelical views. To a large extent, the "Log College" and its graduates set the pattern for evangelicalism in America which survives and is flourishing today. When George Whitefield came to these shores he found his most enthusiastic support in the elder William Tennant, and his alumni.

<sup>1</sup>W. W. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, pp. 268-281.



In the Second Great Awakening (c. 1800-10) likewise colleges played a major role. A revival occurred in a little Presbyterian backwoods college, Kampden-Sidney in Virginia during 1786. It soon spread to nearby Washington College. From these college revivals came the most influential leaders in American Presbyterianism for the coming generation.<sup>2</sup> The Presbyterian revivalists on the frontier were college trained men.

Among the Congregationalists, the revival at Yale in 1800 under the leadership of Timothy Dwight exerted a nation-wide influence and helped set the pattern for others. The greatest revival preachers of that generation came from these school centers.

This suffices to indicate that learning is not necessarily hostile to a warm evangelistic fervor, but rather, the right kind of education is its bulwark.

#### Education Aids Missions

Education has played a prominent role in modern missionary evangelism. The roving missionary like Francis Xavier, who covered a wide territory and superficially influenced thousands, has proven less successful than the evangelist-teacher who has influenced only hundreds but has taken time to train others to do the same work. This was Jesus' method. The example of William Carey and Alexander Duff, who made Christian education prominent from the first in their missionary enterprise, has proven to be the sounder strategy. The policy of such modern missionary organizations as the Oriental Missionary Society, with their emphasis on training a native ministry to take the primary responsibility for evangelism, is both Scripturally and historically sound.

The Free Methodist church in its early days had two courses to take so far as its educational program was concerned. It could train its leaders in Bible institutes with little concern for general education with emphasis on the spiritual life and evangelistic outreach. The latter alternative was adopted. Thus, the Church now has liberal arts colleges accredited, or on the way to become such, rather than Bible schools. This liberal arts curriculum is the basis for specialized training at the professional or graduate level. The Bible institutes, which multiplied during the latter portion of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, are now realizing their mistake in neglecting the broad field of study. They are now rapidly becoming four-year liberal arts colleges and seeking regional accreditation. Such is the case, for instance, with God's Bible School in Cincinnati, and the National Bible Institute in New York (now Shelton College). But another precedent should serve as a warning. The older denominations, which built liberal

<sup>2</sup>W. W. Sweet, *Revivalism in America*, p. 119.

arts colleges in which to train their youth, found that their denominational schools had a habit of departing from the faith of the fathers and founders and becoming "modernistic." This has been the pattern in the major institutions for the training of ministers -- Harvard, Yale, Brown, Columbia, Union and others. Just as the influence for revival came through some schools, so the trend toward rationalism began also in other schools and spread into the church. In one or two generations the churches become like the schools in which their ministers are trained.

Education, a Tool of Evangelism

Education then is not to be feared as hostile to vital Christianity. It is rather a tool, which, like science, can be either a bane or a blessing. It has been utilized to begin and to promote a revival of primitive Christianity in both Europe and the American colonies. Today the emphasis which holiness schools occupy in the modern Holiness Movement attests the importance higher education plays in the perpetuation of an evangelical Christian witness. The Free Methodist Church has laid a solid foundation in stressing the liberal arts permeated by the Christian ethic and evangel. It can now utilize this agency to foster an even more varied and effective evangelistic emphasis. Such it now seems to be doing. The alternative is to permit the schools to follow the precedent of older denominations and, under the pretense of being "free" and up-to-date, to betray the cause for which they were created. The way to avoid this is not to be suspicious of higher education and educators but to expect from them, yea, to insist upon a learning which is Christ-centered. When a church is served by Christian schools that are academically respectable as well as spiritually vital and evangelistic, the pattern for perpetual revival has been set. It has happened thus before; it can again. Indeed, it must again if our way of life is to prevail.

## The Wesleyan Conception Of Evangelism

William M. Arnett

Following the spiritual crisis of May 24, 1738, in which he was soundly converted, John Wesley saw the work of the church in its true perspective. He fully realized, as he had not been able to realize prior to the crisis, that evangelism was the urgent, primary, and perennial task of the church. The focal point in the twelve rules of a "Helper" in the Methodist Societies was in these familiar words: "You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work" (*Works* VIII, 310, Jackson edition). In order to impress his helpers that their duties were not to become merely perfunctory, he further admonished them that it was not their business merely to preach so many times and to take care of this or that society, but "to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord" (*Ibid.*). Always the grand objective of these methods and means was to be kept in view: to win the lost to Jesus Christ.

The admonition was not a mere piece of pious advice by the father of Methodism; it was the consuming passion of his own heart and ministry. Something of the devotion and self-denial which he brought to the work of evangelism is revealed in an entry in his Journal in the year 1759. After preaching in the open air at Newcastle-upon Tyne, he wrote: "What marvel the devil does not love field preaching! Neither do I: I love a commodious room, a soft cushion, a handsome pulpit. But where is my zeal, if I do not trample all these underfoot in order to save one more soul?" (Journal, IV, 325, Curnock edition). Two significant observations are worth noting about this particular entry: first, that it was twenty years after he had begun field-preaching, and second, that it was on one of these occasions at Newcastle that some of his congregation began to pelt him with mud and rotten eggs (cf. Tyerman Life and Times of John Wesley, II, 329). Here was a man determined to do the work of evangelism regardless of the cost! The fire of God was in his soul as it was in Jeremiah and St. Paul, and the work of God must be done.

On the high vocation of evangelism he focused his efforts for more than fifty years. Only eight days before his death on March 2, 1791, Wesley preached his last sermon. The evangelistic note still predominated on that occasion as he dwelt on the text, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6). Without question he was the greatest evangelist England ever had. His life and ministry of abundant labors -- with his unflagging zeal in his evangelistic appeal to the heart and conscience of England, his brooding care of awakened souls, his organizing genius in the shepherding of his followers, and his devotion to practical religion -- yield for us some insights and principles which have enduring value in the work of Christ. It is the purpose of the present study to set forth some of these principles, which include the centrality of preaching, the message of the evangel, the importance of Christian experience, the adaptability of methods, and the criterion of genuineness.

#### THE CENTRALITY OF PREACHING

The Apostle Paul exalted the ministry of preaching, for "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). No one has practiced this supreme act more persistently and consistently than did Wesley. He stated in his *Journal* (V, 116) that he preached about 800 times a year. It is thought that he must have preached at least three or four times a day during the last fifty years of his life, and that, from the time of his return from America in 1738 he had preached no less than 40,000 sermons, with some estimates as high as 52,400. (Cf. *Piette John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism*, p. 392). His labors were diversified, but his primary and absorbing task was the preaching of the Gospel, as these figures might well prove. His work throughout the British Isles necessitated 250,000 miles of travel, very largely devoted to his preaching ministry.

The evangelistic emphasis predominates in Wesley's sermons. He was not the type of preacher who is content to "shoot an arrow at a venture". Like Peter at Pentecost, he applied his message to his audience. The Gospel message had a relevancy to the present hour, the present moment. It was more than a mere convenience -- something to be accepted or rejected at leisure. The message carried with it a compelling urgency, and Wesley did not leave the responsibility of applying his message to the hearers alone; He was bold enough to make the application himself. In fact, his directness was responsible for closing more than one pulpit to him. Nor did the complexion of his audience deter him at this point. It was from St. Mary's pulpit at Oxford that Wesley courageously declared "in trumpet tones the distinctive message of the Methodist revival,

to the consternation of University dignitaries accustomed to the cold official sermons normally dealing with some recondite point of morals or philosophy" (Baker The Methodist Pilgrim in England, p. 24). It was the seventh and last time he was called upon to preach the University sermon, for on that occasion (August 24, 1744) he boldly confronted the officialdom at Oxford with Bible religion in a message on "Scriptural Christianity" (in which 176 Scripture quotations were woven into the sermon).

With this strong emphasis upon preaching, it is not surprising that Wesley's sermons became a part of the doctrinal standards for the Methodist preaching houses. Wesley formulated no Creed, but he regarded the so-called "Standard Sermons" and his "Notes Upon the New Testament" as the exposition of truths defined in the New Testament and restated in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England. These were a natural form of doctrinal standard for a church that originated out of a glorious era of gospel preaching. Actually, this form of standard was a reversion to the Apostolic and primitive form of standard. The Apostolic Church was an evangelistic Church, and its standard of doctrine was first of all a type of preaching. Such New Testament expressions as "another gospel" (Galatians 1:6), "the gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:7), "the gospel which was preached of me" (Galatians 1:11), "no other doctrine" (I Timothy 1:3), "according to the glorious gospel" (I Timothy 1:11), and "the form of sound words" (I Timothy 1:13), as well as other phrases (Cf. I Timothy 4:6, 16; 6:3, 20; II Timothy 1:14; 2:2), amply indicate there was a familiar form or norm of preaching.

Thus, the Wesleyan message, delivered by Spirit-anointed preachers, was a revival of New Testament Christianity. In his Short History of Methodism Wesley wrote that in 1738 he and a few associates were "resolved to be Bible-Christians at all events; and, wherever they were, to preach with all their might plain, old Bible Christianity" (Works, VIII, 349). The results of their preaching were phenomenal -- multitudes were won to Christ, and even historians agree that the course of English history was changed.

#### THE MESSAGE OF THE EVANGEL

Wesley did not discover or preach a new gospel, but he had such a clear and vital grasp of the richness of the Christian message that "all the elements of gospel truth were in him combined in a burning focus of spiritual light and heat, as, perhaps, they had not been since the Apostolic Age" (Burwash Wesley's Doctrinal Standards, pp. xiii, xiv). The great principles of scriptural religion, as understood and proclaimed by John Wesley, in his "Standard Sermons" have been summarized by Chancellor Burwash of Canada as follows:

1. The universality and impartiality of God's grace to man as manifested in the provisions of the Atonement.
2. The freedom of the human will, and man's individual, probational responsibility to God.
3. The absolute necessity, in religion, of holiness in heart and life.
4. The natural impossibility of this to fallen human nature.
5. The perfect provision for this necessity and impossibility, as well as for the pardon of past sins, in the salvation offered by Christ.
6. The sole condition of this salvation -- faith.
7. The conscious witness of the Spirit to this salvation. (*Ibid.*, p. xii, xiii)

The richness of the Wesleyan message can be seen in the vital synthesis and presence of all the great emphases that have characterized historical Christianity at its best. Wesley's full-orbed conception of New Testament Christianity

embraced the great scriptural verities of all ages and schools of Christian thought. It grasped the wideness of God's love with the Old Greek Christian and the modern Arminian, and it sounded the depths of the human heart with Augustine. It maintained the necessity of good works with the Roman Church, and it recognized the peculiar import of faith with Protestantism. With the Churchman it held the importance of means, and with the evangelical mystic, it recognized the peculiar office of inward grace; and it built the doctrines of inward holiness and Christian perfection of the English mystics upon their true foundation; by uniting them to the evangelical principles of saving faith (*Ibid.*).

In a word Wesley was Scriptural, historical, experimental, and practical. All the great phases of the Christian life were proclaimed in the Wesleyan revival, such as repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, the witness of the Spirit, the conflict with sin in believers, and perfect love. Wesley and his co-laborers saw the lost state of England. Sin was everywhere, even in the church and especially among the depraved populace. In the light of this fact, Wesley's succinct admonition to Alexander Coates is characteristic of his attitude in emphasizing the following practical truths found in the Bible:



Practical religion is your point; therefore keep to this: repentance toward God, faith in Christ, holiness of heart and life, a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, the continual need of His atoning blood, a constant confidence in Him, and all these every moment to our life's end (Letters IV, 159, Telford edition).

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

The religion of the heart as a conscious experience of the Christian believer occupies a central place in Wesleyan evangelism. "Joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13) is the spiritual birthright of every redeemed child of God. John Wesley and his followers insisted that the foundation of the Christian life is not laid in some mysterious communication of sacramental grace, much less in a mere intellectual assent to a creed or great principles of religious truth, but in a conscious reception of justifying, regenerating, and sanctifying grace, through a definite act of personal faith in Christ.

In his comment on Jesus' discourse on the new birth in John 3, Wesley says "our Lord shows that no external profession, no ceremonial ordinances, or privileges of birth, could entitle any to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom," "since 'this could only be wrought in man by the almighty power of God' because 'every man born into the world was by nature in a state of sin, condemnation, and misery.' Therefore, no man can enter the kingdom 'except he experience that great inward change by the Spirit'" (Notes Upon the New Testament, p. 311, 1950 edition).

The doctrine of assurance has important significance in the teaching of Wesley. He defined it as "an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God" (Standard Sermons I, 208, Sugden edition). Writing of his own experience at Aldersgate, Wesley tells us: "The Spirit itself bore witness to my spirit, that I was a child of God, gave me an evidence thereof; and I immediately cried, 'Abba, Father!'" (Ibid. II, 350). In regard to a question concerning entire sanctification as a spiritual crisis, "But how do you know, that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption," Wesley answered: "We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit" (Works XI, 420).

Two recurring phrases in the writings of John Wesley are "experimental religion" and "experimental salvation." The experimental nature of the Christian faith was a truth he emphasized

continually. For example, in his important Notes Upon the New Testament (1950 edition) we find these expressions: "an experimental knowledge of Christ as the Son of God" (p. 713, note on Ephesians 4:13); "the experimental knowledge of pardoning love" (p. 722, note on Ephesians 6:17); "the inward, experimental knowledge of Christ, as my Lord" (p. 734, note on Philippians 3:8); "the divine, experimental knowledge of God and of Christ" (p. 890, note on II Peter 1:2); and "experimentally know him" (p. 910, note on I John 3:6). And what Wesley emphasized has been confirmed by a multitude of witnesses across the years.

#### THE ADAPTABILITY OF METHODS

Though conservative by nature, Wesley was willing to modify his methods in order to meet the spiritual needs of multitudes without Christ. His conversion not only changed his view of the neglected doctrines of the Church and modified his ecclesiastical views, but more significantly, it made him an evangelist of the best type, filled with an insatiable desire to save the souls of men. An indication of the intense struggle he underwent when he began field preaching with Whitefield in Bristol is found in his journal entry: "I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church" (Journal II, 167). That he was determined to utilize a new avenue to reach the masses with the Gospel can be gathered from his entry on the following Monday: "At four in the afternoon I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people." By so doing, Wesley and his co-laborers reached great multitudes of people who were alienated from the Church.

All this was necessitated because so many churches had closed their doors to him. He found it impossible to observe all the proprieties expected of an Anglican minister with respect to other clergymen and their parishes. In order to fulfill the Divine commission which had been given to him, he found it necessary to disobey Episcopal Canons, and began preaching in the open fields in the parishes of other clergymen. In addition, he practiced and encouraged extemporaneous prayer, in spite of his love of the Anglican liturgy. He also sent out some of his converts as laypreachers. It was not that he had no respect for tradition or for authority. The whole story indicates that Wesley was not first a churchman and then an eager seeker of souls. On the contrary, he was first an

eager seeker of souls, then a churchman. When Church or ecclesiastical privilege or pronouncements stood in the way of the well-being of souls, then Wesley did not hesitate to put this well-being first. This was a foremost necessity for Wesley, the evangelist. Like the Apostle Paul, Wesley believed that a God-called man was under compulsion to preach the Gospel, and his duty to that commission was a first consideration under all circumstances. When James Hervey criticized him for preaching in another's parish, Wesley made his famous reply: "I look upon all the world as my parish," Wesley's letter, in which this remark is found, is one of the classics of the Evangelical Revival, and lays bare the secret springs and motivations of his labor as an evangelist. (Cf. Letters I, 284-287).

Methods were therefore variable for Wesley. These might be changed, as both time and circumstances might demand, but the objective must be attained. The Gospel must be preached, and men and women must be confronted with the message of full salvation which alone can save from all sin. In order to accomplish this, Wesley had to resort to somewhat irregular methods and means which incited the hostility of the Church of England's clergy who had a blind zeal for the church as an institution without regard for the basic reason for its existence. In spite of these irregularities, as Baines-Griffith, an Anglican clergyman, has observed, "the question resolves itself to this, 'Whether it is not better that men should go to heaven by irregular methods, or regularly go to the devil?'" (Wesley the Anglican, p. 71). Notwithstanding his love for the Church of England, Wesley chose not to trifle with the Divine commission given to him, even though it caused him to defy some of the lesser regulations of the Church.

#### THE CONSERVATION OF RESULTS

As a shepherd of souls, Wesley was aware that "to retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it" (*Ibid.* VIII, 249). In fact, said Wesley, hardly one in three does. It was for this reason that Wesley gave himself to such prodigious labor in organizing counselling, and writing in order that awakened souls might come to a settled devotion to God and truth. As John S. Simon indicates, Wesley "saw that to lead a man to the Cross and then allow him to wander back into the world was to assist at a soul-tragedy" (John Wesley and the Methodist Societies p. 49). Wesley's organizing genius devised means through the ever-expanding fellowship of the United Societies for assisting new converts in their new-found faith. The organizational framework of the United Societies is described in his "Plain Account of the People Called Methodist", which included the classes with their leaders, the bands, membership tickets, and the responsibilities of assistants, stewards, and other

officers. Once again, the organization was not an end in itself, but rather to assist the members toward their realization of moral and spiritual progress.

In addition to the organization of the Societies, spiritual channels were emphasized to aid in Christian development. These spiritual channels were summed up in the "means of grace". There were two categories of such "means" those "instituted" which included prayer, searching the Scriptures, the Lord's Supper, fasting, and "Christian conference"; while the "prudential" means of grace, though not so specifically stated, were intended to regulate life in its various relationships. They included such matters as the training of the mind, the care of one's health, the planning of daily routine, the choice of companions, the use of money, and simplicity of dress.

It was in this manner, through the medium of organizational procedures and the means of grace, plus the untiring labors of Wesley and his colleagues, that the marvelous spiritual harvests of the Eighteenth Century Revival were conserved.

#### THE CRITERION OF GENUINENESS

John Wesley had a keen appreciation for the responsibilities, with their eternal consequences, which devolve upon a man who is called of God. The criterion of fruit-bearing is the test of a preacher. "By their fruit ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:16). "True prophets convert sinners to God, or at least confirm and strengthen those that are converted. False prophets do not," wrote Wesley. The chief mark of the false prophet is "not turning men from the power of Satan to God" (*Notes Upon the New Testament*, p. 43). In spite of ecclesiastical pressure and even bigotry and prejudices, Wesley was determined to obey God rather than men. Writing his brother Charles in 1755, Wesley commented on the excommunication of a Mr. Gardiner by the Bishop of London for preaching without a license: ". . . if we must either dissent or be silent, actum est. We have no time to trifle. Adieu" (*Letters* III, 131). It was characteristic of Wesley's spirit from first to last. There was no question about his love for the Church of England, but he wouldn't be silenced in preaching the gospel. Fittingly, the final entry in his famous *Journal*, only a few months before his death in 1791, was concerning his preaching ministry. He had preached in St. Paul's Church in Shadwell, enforcing "that important truth, 'One thing is needful'", to which Wesley added the comment, "and I hope many, even then, resolved to choose the better part" (*Journal* VIII 110). The fire of love and the zeal for souls continued to burn brightly to the end of his earthly labors, and the end itself matched and crowned the whole course of his ministry. Every God-called preacher put in trust with the Gospel, bound for the scrutinizing

judgment of a holy God, will feel constrained to pray, as he thinks of John Wesley: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

## Book Reviews

Books reviewed in THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN may be ordered from the Seminary Bookstore, Wilmore, Kentucky.

*The Smaller Local Church* By: W. Curry Mavis. Winona Lake, Ind.: Light and Life Press, 1957. 189 pp. \$3.00.

This publication is concerned with the basic principles underlying the work of the smaller churches in America, both rural and urban.

The writer's responsible offices in his own denomination have kept him in close touch with the varied problems peculiar to the smaller churches. For a number of years he has taught seminary students courses in pastoral care and in church administration.

Although recent years have seen the appearance of several significant books dealing with problems peculiar to the rural church, none in the experience of this reviewer has attempted a diagnosis and solution of those problems which are common to rural and urban churches alike. In this, the present treatise is unique.

But if the text treats of problems and solutions, it cannot be said that the problem approach dominates. Here is a practical and constructive discussion on how to promote the work and interests of the smaller churches. It is the kind of book for which many have been waiting. Its author comes to grips with issues of vital concern to the majority of ministers irrespective of denominational attachment; for most of the churches in America would come within the scope of the "smaller churches."

In these days when the morale of many ministers, in the lesser churches particularly, is repeatedly low, the invigorating atmosphere of these pages should prove highly stimulating -- as for instance, the chapter in which the author discusses the genius of the smaller churches. Other chapter headings which tap the potential resources of these churches, and which are rich in practical detail, are these: Organizing for Action, Carrying On a Comprehensive Program, Publicity, Caring for the Flock, Worship, Christian Education, and Evangelism.

The book throughout shows a healthy emphasis on the social aspects of the Gospel as these relate to the work of the churches in point. Rewarding reading for both the minister and the layman!

James D. Robertson



Asbury Theological Seminary is pleased to present the volume, *The Smaller Local Church* by Dr. W. C. Mavis, professor of Pastoral Service. It will be available on March 15, 1957, from Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Indiana, or Asbury Seminary Bookstore. \$3.00

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#### THE EVANGELICAL COMMENTARY SERIES

*The Gospel According to Mark* by Ralph Earle. Zondervan, 1957.  
Cloth, 192 pages. \$2.95 until June 30, 1957 -- \$3.95 thereafter.

The volume at hand is the first in a series of a forty volume commentary projected for publication over the next five to ten years. By way of introduction to the project, it is hoped by those who have sponsored this work that it will fill a long-felt need among the large group of Christians who stand in the Arminian-Wesleyan tradition. The editorial and advisory boards, as listed in this initial volume, show a broad and inclusive representation of scholars and church leaders among the best known exponents of the Wesleyan doctrine of "Perfect Love." Dr. George Allen Turner of Asbury Theological Seminary, whose book *The More Excellent Way* is recognized as a classic in the field of Wesleyan thought, is chairman of the editorial board. The names of Dr. Paul Rees of Minneapolis and Dr. W. E. Sangster of London as consulting editors indicate the high level of scholarly research and spiritual insight which the commentary seeks to present. However, it is also encouraging to note the names of two advisers who are not Arminian in their theology, but whose scholarship and integrity are so universally respected that they were asked to serve in advisory capacity. This was done in order that their scrutiny of manuscripts should insure fair treatment of all points of view. It is believed that this safeguard will prevent such a worthy undertaking from slipping into the pitfall of narrow sectarianism.

This initial volume on the Gospel of Mark by Dr. Ralph Earle of Nazarene Theological Seminary displays a balance of scholarship and appreciation for the inspired nature of the Scriptures. The

author has brought to bear on this study the results of some eight years of intensive research on this particular Gospel. His style is refreshingly light without being insignificantly shallow. On matters where opinions of text, translation, and interpretation differ among scholars of note, we have not been labored with multiplied detail, but have been informed of the differences. Where possible, we have been given the consensus of opinions which appear to carry most weight. As an example, the question of the textual authenticity of Mark 16:9-18 as it appears in the King James Version is a perplexing one. Dr. Earle has given this matter wise and enlightening treatment without resorting to unsupportable dogma. In so doing he has set the tone for the whole volume. Research scholars, ministers, and laymen alike can feel that they have been treated fairly in the handling of a delicate matter. It was this reader's feeling after reading the introduction that here was a commentator who could be relied upon to treat his material fairly and unbiasedly.

The format of the book makes for easy reading. The text of the American Standard Version of 1901 is printed in large type at the top of the page. Beneath it, in divided columns, is the exegesis and exposition. Footnotes are full length across the bottom of the page. The text is divided and treated in paragraph sections, rather than by rigid chapter and verse divisions. Reference is made to corresponding topics in Matthew and Luke, thus furnishing a harmony of the Synoptics.

An outstanding exegetical feature of the work is the author's own very literal translation from the Greek text. His explanatory notes are excellent on passages which vary from the text of most widely accepted versions. The literal nature of this translation also does away with the necessity of much exegesis, since the results of this research have gone into the finished translation.

The annotated bibliography from which research was taken appears in the front of the volume. The evaluation of each reference work will be of great assistance to those who wish to continue research on their own.

At a few points there is a sense of brevity where a more lengthy discussion is indicated to provide the reader with a broader base for forming opinions. But within the limitations of space which has been allotted to this volume, the author has fulfilled his assignment well in meeting the stated purpose of the entire project . . . to place in the reader's hand a volume characterized by sound exegesis, wide perspective, up-to-date scholarship, spiritual insight, and contemporary relevance." He has prepared a one volume handbook of excellent caliber which emphasizes the rich spiritual and devotional quality of Scripture. The Gospel According to Mark, in all of its rich vitality, is brought to the reader through the discerning

minds and spirit of one who has given his life to the study and teaching of the Bible. Scholars will find its references extensive and accurate; ministers will find its material presented in a manner which lends itself to sermon preparation; and the layman who loves his Bible will find his soul rejoiced as he reads.

The reviewer believes that this commentary will become a standard among those who seek to add new material to their fund of Bible knowledge.

Russell C. Murphy

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*What the Holiness People Believe* by Jack Ford. Birkenhead, England: Emmanuel Bible College and Missions, 1956. 70 pages. 1/6s.

Early in 1953, the first lectureship honoring the late Rev. John D. Drysdale was established in Birkenhead, England, with the Rev. Jack Ford as Lecturer. The first series of lectures, five in number, has shortly ago been published by the Emmanuel Bible College, host to the lectureship.

The small volume before us grows out of a long and thorough acquaintance with the literature of Christian sanctity upon the part of the author, who holds the B.D. degree from the University of London, and who has been for some years Principal of the Beech-lawn Bible College near Manchester, England. Basically, the work is a re-statement of the historic Wesleyan position with respect to the doctrine of Christian Perfection, embodying a special plea for a re-emphasis upon the practical and social implications of the doctrine of Christian holiness.

A second emphasis in these lectures is that of the integral relation between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the entire cleansing of the believer. It is in the development of this theme that one special merit of the work lies. Principal Ford is an incisive thinker, and penetrates the fallacies to which Wesleyans (as well as the adherents of other forms of theology) fall prey through the undue use of metaphors. It goes without saying that the work is explicit in its definitions, particularly the definition of sin.

The final chapter, entitled "The Depth of the Deliverance and the Place of Confession and Testimony" seems to this reviewer to be outstanding for the light it sheds upon the distinction between humanity and carnality, and in its analysis of the instinctive life of man. It abounds likewise in practical counsels with respect to the

profession of the grace of heart purity.

Principal Ford is in acknowledged debt to the classic literature of Christian sanctity, and frequently refers with special approval to the Glide Lectures delivered by Dr. Paul S. Rees at Asbury Theological Seminary in 1947. His presentation is sane and vivid. This reviewer rejoices that such a lectureship is keeping in memory Principal J. D. Drysdale, with whom he had the privilege of teaching for a year. The first lecturer, Mr. Ford, has expounded with grace the message in the proclamation of which Mr. Drysdale was outstanding among many in his native Britain.

Harold B. Kuhn

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*Being and Believing* by Bryan Green. New York: Scribner's, 1956.

The question, "What can a man believe?" is being increasingly modified so as to read, "What must a Christian believe?" The little volume under review here seeks to reply to the latter inquiry. The writer, at present a Canon of Birmingham Cathedral in England, has had a wide ministry as Chaplain in the British Army, and latterly in evangelistic campaigns around the world.

*Being and Believing* is a compilation of articles which Canon Green wrote serially for a British women's magazine. They deal with the basic propositions expressed in the Apostles' Creed, The Lord's Prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Ten Commandments. The topics, seventy-three in number, are selected with a view to answering the questions which arise in the mind of the not-too-well-taught layman.

The content of the several articles may be characterized as sincerely Evangelical and tactfully apologetic. The author's acceptance of historic Christian supernaturalism is forthright, and the objective of his efforts is that of confirming believers in their personal relation to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The approach is human and vivid. The persuasion is gentle, but cumulative in force. The book would make a splendid gift for the person who might have doubts which were not too deeply rooted, and whose quest for faith is earnest.

Harold B. Kuhn

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*The Gospel in Ezekiel* by Thomas Guthrie. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d., 395 pp. \$3.95

This is another volume in the Zondervan reprint classics. It is a series of sermons by the eloquent Scottish preacher of the early 19th century. There are twenty-two sermons in all, taken from the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel. This great evangelical chapter in the prophet, is the basis for a series of messages based upon several texts in the chapter. The sermon titles include the "Messenger", "Man's Sinning", "God's Motive in Salvation", "God Glorified in Redemption", "The Benefits of Redemption", "The New Heart", "The New Life", and "The Sanctity of the Believer". The messages are expository in nature and evangelistic in emphasis.

A characteristic of these sermons is the author's flowing rhetoric and vivid figures of speech. He is an eloquent preacher. The illustrations are taken mostly from the Scottish hill country and are very apt. The author is very articulate and emphatic in setting forth a truly evangelical gospel as distinctive from the religion in the formal churches with which he and his congregation are familiar.

The Reformed theology is apparent in the fact that the author gives no assurance of full deliverance from sin while "in the flesh". But for the most part there is little that is theologically objectionable and most of it is doctrinally sound. The style is especially vigorous, making for easy reading. Zondervan is to be commended for making the work of this Scottish divine again available. The printing is in excellent format, and a credit to the publishers.

George A. Turner

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*Old Testament in Modern Research* by: Herbert F. Hahn. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1954. 262 pages. \$4.00.

This book is one of the most important to be published in recent years. It deals with an evaluation of various methods used by Bible scholars in interpreting the Old Testament. To read the book is a "must" for anyone who desires to keep up with recent trends in Old Testament studies.

The author proposes to examine various methods used by the several schools of thought which have prevailed in critical studies during the past century. Scholars face an impasse at the present time and the author desires to outline clearly the alternatives confronting them in a study of the Old Testament.

The book shows ample evidence that the author has read widely, and his treatment of each method analyzed is thorough. There is little evidence of personal prejudice and Hahn's own position is revealed mainly by his discussion of monotheism. On this subject, he definitely accepts the view that monotheism did not appear in the Israelitish faith until the exile. Otherwise, each critical method is keenly described as to basic assumptions, governing principles, weaknesses, and contributions.

After a brief survey of the history of the critical approach to the Old Testament, Hahn evaluates the anthropological, the religio-historical, the form-critical, the sociological, the archaeological, and the theological approaches. Many important books in each field are discussed, and numerous articles are referred to in the footnotes. Yet, in spite of the fact that the subject-matter is "heavy" the book is well-written and well-organized. It closes with an author index but there is no subject index.

While it must be admitted that the author does a good job of summarizing and evaluating the critical methods chosen for discussion, one could wish that he had included a survey of other methods such as textual criticism, philology, and especially the application of modern psychology to Old Testament prophecy. Hahn could have increased the value of his work by discussing more thoroughly the role played by underlying philosophical assumptions. Kantian epistemology, positivism, Hegelianism, and the rising influence of existentialism ought to have been more adequately discussed in relation to their bearing upon the methods used by modern critical scholars.

G. Herbert Livingston

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*Mission: U.S.A.* by James W. Hoffman. New York, Friendship Press, 1956. 181 pages. Cloth, \$2.50; Paper \$1.25.

The Church still faces frontiers in America. Some of these frontiers are presented vividly as evangelistic opportunities and responsibilities by James W. Hoffman in Mission, U.S.A.



The author surveys spiritual problems that confront the Christian Church in both rural and urban America. He views the religious needs of service men and of young people in college. He observes Christian work that is being done in institutions -- prisons, hospitals, etc., -- as it is carried on by chaplains. He looks at American family life with its opportunities and needs for Christian counsel and guidance. He surveys the religious needs of migrants and others, who as Thoreau says, live "lives of quiet desperation."

Hoffman, associate editor of *PRESBYTERIAN LIFE* and a freelance writer, writes as a keen observer. His "hop, skip and jump around the country," to use his words, took him to some important religious frontiers of our land.

This book is specific in detailing what local churches and other Christian groups are doing to meet human need in their communities. In this regard, the author is generous in stating the techniques that are being used. The book thus becomes a kind of source-book on methods.

This little volume should have a wide reading. It offers a cogent refutation to the man who says that the Church is doing nothing to meet the urgent needs of people. It offers inspiration to those who love the Church. It provides ideas for those who are seeking new ways of service.

There is a good bibliography and a "friendly map" in color at the end of the book. The map shows the distribution of foreigners, Indians, and Negroes in America.

W. C. Mavis

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*The Lord of the Harvest* by S. Franklin Logsdon. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954. 153 pages. \$2.00.

This is the Holy Spirit's "day", and increasingly serious Bible students are recognizing "the manifestation and ministration of the Holy Spirit" in His administrative work in the present divine economy. The author of *The Lord of the Harvest* has been a busy pastor, having served in the past the Moody Memorial Church, Chicago, and therefore interested in the person and work of the Holy Spirit from the pastor's approach to the subject.

Here is a book which abounds with homiletical helps for the

expository preacher. Its style and suggestiveness will prod the mind, stimulate the will, and refresh the heart of the reader. The Spirit's manifold ministry is here presented with a freshness that is becoming to the style of a successful pulpiteer and Bible Conference speaker.

The Spirit's varied functions are viewed in His respective relations to the world of the unsaved, the corporate body of believers, and the individual Christian. Of this last relationship, writes Logsdon, "There is power through the Holy Spirit to regenerate, providing a new nature; to sanctify, producing a new character; to energize, promoting a new fruitfulness; to illuminate, presenting a new vision" (p. 8).

With its many merits in content and style, sermonic value and inspiration, one hesitates to point out the book's weaknesses. However, to this reviewer, the title of the book might be challenged. The author has called the Holy Spirit "the Lord of the Harvest." Does such a designation do justice to those New-Testament passages dealing with the second person of the Godhead, the Son of God-Son of Man, as "the Lord of the Harvest" (see: Matt. 9; Luke 10; John 4; and Rev. 14)? To fail to maintain both the distinctiveness though inseparableness of the persons of the Trinity, and the peculiarity of certain offices to each person of the Godhead, is to invite theological confusion on the matter of the Trinity.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of his study has been the author's failure to distinguish between the birth of the Spirit and the baptism with the Spirit in the believer's life, between holiness of life begun in regeneration and the purification of the heart in entire sanctification. Nowhere through this book has the author dealt with what some of the great Biblical scholars have called the single most important statement in the book of Acts, namely, Acts 15:8-9. Peter there gave the inside story of the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit, and pointed out the essential work of the Spirit as that of purifying the believer's heart when by faith He is sought and received. The above-mentioned defects also account for the unsatisfactory treatment the author gives to "The Dozen in the Dark" found in Acts 19:1-7.

In spite of its deficiencies this book will surely heighten the preacher's grasp of the Biblical emphasis upon the manifestations and mission of the Holy Spirit in this Gospel era.

Delbert R. Rose

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*Christianity and the Existentialists* by Carl Michalson (Editor).  
New York: Scribner's, 1956. 205 Pages. \$3.75.

The past five years have yielded a number of works dealing with the question of Existentialism, some expounding its major themes, the others dealing with the specific forms which existential thought assumed in the men espousing it. Here is a volume which is designed especially to note the bearing of the main existential themes upon Christian faith. The Editor has written the first chapter, "What is Existentialism?"; in it he is concerned primarily with two questions: Can Existentialism support its claim to be a serious philosophical form?, and in what sense(s) does it challenge the real foes of Christianity?

No such work could be imagined which failed to include, early in its chapters, one upon Kierkegaard. H. Richard Niebuhr has furnished such a chapter, in which he takes for granted that the reader is acquainted with the details of the life of the Sage of Copenhagen. The negative work of S.K. is sketched under the form of his "polemic against illusion"; Professor Niebuhr sees these illusions as three: The Shadow World of Objects, The Subject as Shadow, and Objective Christianity. The latter of these is treated by our writer with as much of the picturesque as Kierkegaard himself employed. In his treatment of the positive aspect of the Kierkegaardian teaching, namely that of his treatment of "real" Christianity, Dr. Niebuhr catches the major emphases: it is difficult to be a Christian; it is painful to continue to be one; and, it is presumption to claim to be one.

John A. Mackay furnishes a chapter descriptive of the work of Miguel de Unamuno, in which he brings to the English reader the major features of the great Spaniard's teaching, namely his emphasis upon Vocation, and his emphasis upon the preeminence of the element of the tragic in human life. Matthew Spinka does us much the same service with respect to Nicholas Berdyaev, although it is evident that he is trying to compress into one chapter more than can be brought within its limits. This section is strong in its recognition of the affinity between Berdyaev and such mystics as Jakob Boehme. At this and other points, as Spinka rightly observes, Berdyaev is sharply out of line with historic Christian theology; he does not tell us to what extent his thought is shaped by the great "eschatological" writers of nineteenth century Russia, and to what extent his divergence from Western theological positions is an outgrowth of his adherence to Eastern Orthodox theology. Speaking existentially, the most significant section of this chapter is the one dealing with Berdyaev's emphasis upon Creativity, which is in some

sense a correlate of the eschatological element in his thought.

The chapters dealing, respectively, with Gabriel Marcel, and Martin Heidegger, follow, in general, the usual analyses of their thought. Erich Dinkler, in his analysis of Heidegger, upsets the usual evaluation of him by suggesting that he is not really an atheist at all. This section (pp. 115ff) is valuable in tracing the relationships between Heidegger's view of Being and some sort of a transcendental order, provided we remember that belief in a transcendental order is not, in itself, sufficient to constitute a man religious in any very significant sense. Erich Dinkler recognizes this in his words, "Certainly we cannot characterize Heidegger as an outspoken Christian existentialist . . ." He is, however, extremely anxious not to "put Heidegger into an antithesis to Christian faith."

This reviewer has not made up his own mind with respect to the chapter, "Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art". One who has an appreciation for that which we have come to consider classical art finds it difficult to place a sympathetic evaluation upon the incoherent and distorted elements in modern art. No doubt life contains much which corresponds to these elements. What may be questioned is, whether art should be a mere reflector of what life is, or whether it should elevate the ideal in the hope that it might be in some measure embodied in the real.

The final chapter by Professor Hopper, "On the Naming of the Gods in Hoelderlin and Rilke", is exceedingly valuable in that it fills a gap in the usual literature. The poetic contribution to Existentialism has been, in some measure at least, neglected in the literature, and one welcomes not only the addition of a treatment of this phase of the question, but the skill with which it is done in this chapter. Professor Hopper has succeeded in bringing the major lines of thought of the volume into focus. Not only does he see the positive achievements of the existential poets; he also senses their limitations. One feels that he might well have, from the point of view of the Christian theologian, included another section or two at the end of his chapter.

This work is a valuable addition to the literature currently available upon the existentialist movement in philosophy and theology. It makes a useful companion volume to Kurt F. Reinhardt's The Existentialist Revolt, in that whereas Reinhardt sets forth the major themes of Existentialism, Christianity and the Existentialists approaches the subject from the point of view of biography. These two need, as a supplement, John Wild's The Challenge of Existentialism, which relates Existentialism more fully to the major currents of human thought. Read together, these three volumes can do much to dispel the aura of mystery and obscurity which Existentialism has gathered about itself.

Harold B. Kuhn

*The Writings of James Arminius* translated by James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 1772 pages. (3 volumes) \$17.50.

A continuing evidence of the theological renaissance in our time is the re-examination and re-publication of the writings of creative men who stand at the source of various theological traditions. Baker Book House has given great service to the Christian church in reprinting the writings of James Arminius, the celebrated theologian who lived in the latter part of the sixteenth century and the early part of the seventeenth. This three volume set was first published in 1853, though the first two volumes, translated by James Nichols, had been published in 1825 and 1828. Later, this translation was carefully edited by W. R. Bagnall, who also translated the remainder of Arminius' writings and added them in a third volume for the 1853 publication.

Undoubtedly it is true that the name of Arminius has been more often mentioned, either in terms of praise or of reproach, than that of any other theologian, with the exception, perhaps, of John Calvin. It is well to recall at this point that Arminius received his theological training in Geneva under Theodore Beza, the successor to Calvin. Later, Arminius repudiated the views of Calvin and his followers as a result of investigation and preparation which he had made to defend those same views against Richard Coornhert, a layman of Amsterdam, who attacked particularly the doctrine of predestination as taught by Beza and the school at Geneva.

Actually, the scheme of theological doctrine which became known as Arminianism received that designation, not because Arminius was its sole creator and originator, but "from the fact that he collected, and embodied in a system, the scattered and frequently incidental observations of the Christian Fathers and the early Protestant Divines, and, more fully and definitely than any previous writer, explained and defended that scheme" (Preface, p. iii). The main points are set forth in opposition to an absolute predestination and "particular" redemption. It is a tribute to the monumental labors of Arminius, though he died at the age of forty-nine years, that the largest of denominations in Protestantism have embraced these views, including most Lutherans of Europe and America, the Church of England, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the various denominations which include the followers of John Wesley throughout the world.

Volume one presents five orations by Arminius on various subjects, including "The Priesthood of Christ", "The Object of Theology", and others. His views on predestination, divine provi-

dence, the freedom of the will, the grace of God, the divinity of the Son of God, and the justification of man before God, are also set forth. His apology or defense of his theological position involving thirty-one articles are included in this volume, as well as his disputations on twenty-five principal subjects of the Christian religion.

Volume two embraces seventy-nine private disputations on the principal phases of the Christian message, a dissertation and discussion of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, covering approximately 260 pages, a brief study on each of twenty-nine articles of the Christian faith, and two significant letters, the last of which bears the title, "A Letter on the Sin Against the Holy Ghost".

Volume three is devoted almost entirely to a discussion of the doctrine of predestination, the final forty pages presenting an analysis of the ninth chapter of the book of Romans, which illustrates many of the points in the previous discussion.

A general index of subjects, which did not appear in the 1853 edition, is a valuable addition to volume three. Volume one has a sketch of the life of Arminius. Here is excellent source material for pastors, teachers, and thoughtful laymen. The reprinting of these volumes is a significant achievement and event for the present-day religious world.

William M. Arnett

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*Christian Perfection and American Methodism* By: John L. Peters.  
Nashville; Abingdon Press, 1956. 252 pages

This is a very competent study of Christian perfection in early Wesleyan theology, especially as it affected the course of American Methodism. The author wrote it for his Ph.D. dissertation at Yale, and revised it for publication. The volume begins with a thorough study of Wesley's teachings on Christian perfection from his early life through his mature years. While this subject has been reviewed so many times that little that is new can be pointed out, nevertheless this study is distinguished for its thoroughness, its objectivity, and its insight. After a study of Wesleyan teachings the author traces the influence of this emphasis in English Methodism and in American Methodism. He notes that in the first half of the nine-



teenth century the Methodist church in America subscribed to the Wesleyan doctrine without apology. There was a decline in emphasis in the 1820's and 1830's followed by a revival of interest in the 1840's. There followed a period of decline and even opposition at mid-century. As a result of this, there emerged the Free Methodist and Wesleyan churches committed to a propagation of the doctrine. The author fails to correlate this with the revivals of 1800, 1830-40 and 1870-90. Toward the end of the century the doctrine received increasing emphasis and an increasing degree of opposition. By about 1900 the doctrine had evoked so much controversy that many Methodist leaders called for an end to the discussion of the subject in the press and in the pulpit. These tendencies of "come-out-ism" and "crush-out-ism" facilitated the rise of several smaller groups, most of which later merged to form the Nazarene Church. The author's interest in the subject is spurred by the official quietus on the doctrine by the Methodist leaders paralleled by the surprising vitality of the doctrine in smaller churches that have broken off from the parent body. The same phenomena led Orin Manfred Robert Clark to investigate the subject at Boston University and Temple University, respectively, with very similar results. The present work ranks among the very best of such studies of Wesley's theology and history of doctrine. The value of the book is enhanced by some appendices, one of which is concerned with Wesley's own testimony to the experience of perfect love. The volume as a whole makes a major contribution to the study of Wesley's teaching of entire sanctification and of the resulting influences on Christian history.

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*Exploring the Old Testament*

by W. T. Purkiser (Editor) and

C. E. Demaray, Donald S. Metz and Maude A. Stunck.

Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1955. 448 pages. \$4.50

*Exploring the New Testament*

by Ralph Earle (Editor) and Harvey

J. S. Blaney and Carl Hanson. Beacon Hill Press. 467 pages. \$4.50

These two volumes address themselves to the undergraduate, and are designed to serve as textbooks in survey courses in Old

and New Testament respectively. Although both are composite works, the coordination among the contributors is close, so that they present unified methodologies and unified emphases. Represented in the joint authorships are the faculties of Nazarene Theological Seminary and several of the colleges maintained by the Church of the Nazarene.

There are several parallel lines of emphasis in these works. They seek to acquaint the reader with Biblical backgrounds, and to afford a frame of reference within which the two Testaments can be studied and understood. The first of the two works contains three sections designed to orient the reader, Chapters 1, 2 and 16, under titles respectively, "This is God's Word", "Why the Old Testament", and "The Message and Meaning of the Old Testament." Chapters 3 to 15 serve to survey and to analyze the several divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The second volume places the orientation entirely at the beginning, with three chapters entitled, "Why Study the New Testament?", "The World Into Which the New Testament Came", and "The New Testament Transmitted and Translated." These afford a basic introduction to the materials which are analyzed in the thirteen chapters which follows.

Both volumes are concerned with the encouragement of the reading of the Bible in its wholeness, and with letting it speak for itself. The approach is affirmative and of course conservative. The authors indicate, from time to time, an awareness of the work and conclusions of liberal criticism, and in general leave the impression that these conclusions represent the application of theories advanced a priori, which have little support from within the writings as they stand.

The volumes are both well written and embody good bibliographies and helpful appendices. Exploring the Old Testament contains a detailed Chronological table (pages 416-432) and an excellent section of Book Summaries. Both works are meticulously indexed.

Biblical instructors have frequently expressed concern that available textbooks for lower level college courses were either too elementary or else unsuitable because of their lack of emphasis upon the Bible as inspired Revelation. Such will welcome the appearance of these two volumes. And as the college student will find them valuable as texts, so also the general reader of the Bible will appreciate them as an aid to systematic study of the Word.

Harold B. Kuhn

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*The Church in Southeast Asia* by Winburn T. Thomas & Rajah B. Manikam. Friendship Press, New York: 1956.

The joint authorship of this little book by two contemporary and experienced authorities presents an exceedingly interesting and valuable work. Dr. Thomas brings to it a lifetime of careful study, spiritual insight, and devoted service. Dr. Manikam, a native of India and a leader in ecumenical conferences, sheds much light on the problems involved. Dr. Frank T. Cartwright in his introduction points out to the reader that one of the basic convictions of the authors is that the missionary era has indeed come to an end; but that coinciding with this ending is the beginning of the era of the churches.

Here in fifteen short chapters a wealth of missionary information is made available to the reader. The churches of Southeast Asia are still a direct responsibility of the West. The young churches here do not have enough trained personnel or material resources to make the gospel effective in these lands. War and Communism have increased the burden of the new Christian communities. The entire area of Southeast Asia is rich in nature's resources - oil, tin, tea, rubber - but these have not been developed for the benefit of people. In the midst of plenty there is malnutrition and death. Such conditions have provided a fertile soil for Communist seed. There is also a growing nationalism which often opposes the Christian movement. Asia's non-Christians often see the Christian religion as a by-product of Western colonialism.

Protestant churches in Asia are now a fact, say the authors. They are self-governing, responsible, and partly self-supporting. Their independence is somewhat premature. There is less emphasis upon the importance of denominations here than in America. In this regard a remark by Kagawa is illuminating, "When I was baptized, I thought I became a Christian: Now that I am in America, I discover instead that I am a Presbyterian."

In Southeast Asia the missionary is generally esteemed more highly than any other Westerner, because he has sought to reduce disease and slavery. An American flyer's testimony to the work of missions rather well sums up the situation: "Because of missions, I was feasted and not feasted upon when I fell from the sky."

The book concludes with a clear-ringing challenge. The great odds of non-Christian religions and cultures, of communism and increasing secularism call for the best and utmost not only of the young churches themselves, but also of all of Christendom. Governments are now demanding that missionaries have some technical

skills which will contribute to the society in which they labor. The sending church must therefore be understanding and patient in these new church-state relationships abroad. The urgency of evangelism must be felt again by western Christians.

Southeast Asia today is inhabited by 180,000,000 people. The Protestant church membership there is less than 4,000,000. The need is great. Let the Church awake!

Howard F. Shippo

## *Our Contributors*

**DR. JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS** is President of Asbury Theological Seminary, editor of The Herald and author of several books.

**DR. WAYNE A. LAMB** is Pastor of Union Avenue Methodist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, and an alumnus of the Seminary.

**DR. BASIL OSIPOFF** is Professor of Religious Education in Asbury College. Born in Siberia, he was an officer in the Czarist Army, and was converted in the course of his escape from Russia during the revolution.

**DR. ROBERT E. COLEMAN** is McCreeless Professor of Evangelism in Asbury Theological Seminary.

**DR. GEORGE A. TURNER** is Professor of English Bible in Asbury Theological Seminary.

**DR. WILLIAM M. ARNETT** is Professor of Doctrine in Asbury Theological Seminary.

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